HER BOSTON EXPERIENCES

MARGARET ALLSTON

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Works of
Anna Farquhar

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"HIS AMUSED EXPRESSION LENT ME THE COURAGE OF INDIGNATION."

(*See page 47.*)

HER BOSTON EXPERIENCES

A Picture of Modern Boston Society and People

By

ANNA FARQUHAR

[Heretofore appearing as "MARGARET ALLSTON"]

Illustrated by

FRANK O. SMALL

BOSTON

L. C. PAGE & COMPANY

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HER BOSTON EXPERIENCES

CHAPTER I

DURING my first week in Boston I received the impression that I had found my way into a mammoth woman's club where the principal idea was to doubt and weigh every proposition, then disprove it if possible. I was oppressed with the feeling that I alone was always found wanting, until I discovered how general is the individual failure, how deficient every newcomer appears in the local eye. Being afforded shortly the company misery loves from among other visitors to the city, I plucked up my spirit and faced the club eye with all the force of my Scotch-English ancestry. In consequence, I discovered

how near being a bully Boston is; that if a little boy can fight back the big boy backs down. In truth, Boston had not meant to fight at all, but was "merely investigating my esoteric being for purposes of mutual improvement."

This attitude is philanthropic and ethical at the root, but its flower is patterned after the edelweiss, or some other materialised form of frozen virtue utterly cold and suggestive of a frosted window-pane through which one can see neither daylight nor sunshine. But on closer acquaintance I found, generally speaking, that when the sun melted the frost off of the Boston exterior a right warm heart beat far down underneath, and, although its beats were not rapid nor enthusiastic, they were regular and constant, never swerving from an allegiance once taken.

I was born in New York City, but raised in the West, where my father went for business purposes during my infancy, he himself having been introduced into this world in Boston. My brothers grew up typical Westerners, filled with contempt

for any other section of the country, — a spirit erroneously imputed exclusively to Boston and Philadelphia, but in truth one that prevails wherever men are successful and happy. Every bit of ground is to the man what he makes it. An outsider can find his jest in sectional patriotism and still respect it.

The difference between the Boston spirit and that of other localities is that a Bostonian feels an exclusive pride intimating satisfaction, minus invitation, while the Westerner blows his trumpet calling everybody else to have a finger in the best pie ever made, thus revealing the touch of metropolitan provincialism in one and the remnant of pioneer spirit in the other.

And so I went to Boston confirmed in Henry Ward Beecher's creed, "New England is a good place in which to be born, but the West is the place in which to grow," and I observed at once the reason for the sage's truism. Bostonians have no desire to sprout. As for me, I am by nature a sprouter, born with an interrogation point behind me.

I was twenty-two years old when I first went to Boston, to visit the family of my father's eldest brother, Mr. John Allston, who at an early age settled into business prosperity in Boston. His wife, once Miss Drusilla Whetmore, was always, as now, my father tells me, undoubtedly a sprig of the *Mayflower*, whose opinion of anything lying outside of Boston, even as far as the suburbs, was coldly critical to the extent of open hostility.

Were it possible for one to imagine Aunt Drusilla's refined nasal feature taking so vulgar a tilt, one might insinuate that she and a few other Bostonians turn up their noses at any contemporary not born in Summer Street, reared on Beacon Hill, and married into the water side of Beacon Street. The tide of propriety and prosperity moved along that channel, hence this egotistical conclusion reached easily by any proper Bostonian fed upon Saturday beans and the *Boston Evening Transcript*, the journal which directs the Boston minds and morals.

Uncle John and Aunt Drusilla had two

daughters, one older than I, one a year younger. Dorothy, the elder and least proper, had been married a few years when I made that visit, and Elizabeth, the younger, was only just out of college, therefore in her first season; while I, but a year her senior, had been a "worldling" for five years. I say worldling rather than society girl, because I failed to take a degree in society. I loved few things better than the world, but my affections bounded it on all sides, not on the one alone of social position and remote ancestry connected with tea and Pilgrims, which were an old story to me soon after the date of my cradle. Without change of theme and scene I grew restless. Accordingly, my wise parents gave me what I call a liberal education in contradistinction to a college education, with which statement I declare myself a Philistine at the start, for I chose travel instead of school-books.

My cousins I found as different from each other as I was from them. Dorothy, upon her marriage to a Bostonian, proper in family but almost improper according

to Aunt Drusilla and other ladies of the ancient régime, owing to certain liberal propensities noticeable in the latter-day Bostonian, fell in with Mr. Granger's late hours, the reading of New York papers, intimacies among people who professed the arts, and a tendency to "run across to the other side" every year, with ease and no hesitancy. This form of backsliding irritated Aunt Drusilla, who consequently took the more pride in Elizabeth, a girl after her own heart, of studious habits, broad, philanthropic views of life, perfectly settled ideas about Platonic friendship and other relations with the opposite sex, and small sympathy with the restless, inconsequent habits of the Grangers, who were content to live on Commonwealth Avenue, instead of on Beacon Street.

The Grangers were thoroughly good-natured with Aunt Drusilla; it was safe to be so, because her belligerence stopped at the end of her tongue. When I arrived in Boston, late one October day, my relatives had just come up from Beverly Farms, where they formed a prominent part of the

Back Bay colony settled along the North Shore each summer. Aunt Drusilla told me at once that Dorothy and Frederic sent word for me to go to them at Lenox for a week before settling down in town. "You know," added my aunt, looking an almost insinuating defiance over her spectacles and from under the small white cap she wore in harmony with her plain black silk gown, whose style and cut were as inevitable as Queen Victoria's bonnet, "you know, Margaret, or you will soon know, that my eldest daughter and her husband belong to the younger set, with whose indiscretions and light purposeless lives I have no sympathy. One of Dorothy's friends told me not long ago that she held certain infamous modern novels alongside the Bible in her estimation of moral purpose. Any woman who could find a grain of good in an artist's model, or congeniality with Bohemian tastes, is not the woman for my daughters to associate with. I never hesitate to tell Dorothy how I feel about these matters, but with small effect, I fear."

Aunt Drusilla looked over at Elizabeth

with a sigh. At the moment Elizabeth was reading a note. Presently she said: "Mother, Warren Hartwell writes to announce his return some time after Thanksgiving."

Aunt Drusilla looked unusually well pleased for her, I thought. "This is interesting intelligence, Elizabeth," she replied, and turning to me, continued: "This gentleman of whom we speak, Margaret, is a very old friend of our family. He and my daughters were playmates together, even though he is much their senior; quite as his mother was my playmate on Summer Street, when our parents lived side by side. He went to Europe last spring with Dorothy, Frederic, and Elizabeth, but did not return with them in September. Dorothy never returns to town until Thanksgiving. The young people of this generation have little or no appreciation of home life."

I entirely agreed with this last sentiment, although perhaps not in the spirit emphasised by my aunt. The gifts of the gods seemed to me wasted upon a blunted appreciation. When, late in October, one

walks about that part of Boston known as the Back Bay, the part given over to the social and moneyed elect, one must question the pride of Bostonians in their homes covered with masses of burnished crimson ivy unrivalled even by that celebrated as Nature's embellishment of English homes and ruins. If the owners felt the clear gold of the autumn air as I do they would not leave their homes boarded up until Christmas time and so know Boston only in its ugliest moods, merely to follow the dictates of Mrs. Grundy, whose guidance is seldom in sympathy with Nature's laws.

Boston is essentially the autumn city of the world. The air is full of sea; the sky is radiant with sunlight and deep blue or white floating islands; restful vigour permeates the atmosphere. One can scarcely help living to one's utmost possibilities at that time of year in this most attractive of cities. Go and stand on Harvard Bridge, looking off toward Boston, half an hour before sunset. See the glorious sky echoed in colours in the waters of the Charles

River. The sun, still peeping over Corey Hill, shines in at the rear windows of the mile of houses lining the embankment. To the left rises the gilded dome of the State House, surmounting Beacon Hill and its pregnant past; to the right, see the long sweep of the river down which comes rapidly a boat-crew, stroking skilfully. Behind lie Cambridge and Cambridgeport, less interesting at this point, because of factories, smoke-stacks, and church steeples mingled in a crude, jarring mass at that distance; and far off at the north Bunker Hill Monument stands out, pointing to the past. But looking only on the Boston side of the picture, what other American city can boast a more picturesque view in the very midst of its habitable quarter? It was Charlotte Cushman who requested to be buried in such a position that her resting-place might eternally overlook this view of the city she loved best. It is easy to understand the spirit of her desire either when standing beside her grave in Mount Auburn, across the Charles River, or standing thus on Harvard Bridge while the sun

CHARLES RIVER EMBANKMENT FROM HARVARD BRIDGE.

fades. The views are identical, with only a difference of distance.

"There may be other cities of beauty and fame, but they are not Boston, just as heaven may be interesting although it is not Boston," cries the native, and standing on that spot even the Philistine echoes the sentiment warmly.

Boston had been to me, during all my life previous to the period these random reminiscences will cover, a city shrouded in history, in whose streets I expected to meet Concord philosophers recognisable at a glance; also many people resembling the Alcott family, and at least ghosts of Revolutionary heroes.

My first shock came when I found my relatives distinctly modern and unromantic, — in few ways different from other people. I had seen them too seldom to retain a clear impression of their personality. It was to please my father that I accepted their invitation to spend the winter with them.

Aunt Drusilla's invariable costume was quaint and suggestive, and her absorption

in what she called "affairs of serious consequence" was typical of the Boston reputation, but Uncle John was a business man of regular habits, who marched sedately over Beacon Hill to his office, with his neighbours, at the same minute every day. He lunched so long, sat in his club so long, dined so long, read the *Transcript* so long, and slept longer. A sense of humour was his only means of diversion. He and I understood each other from the first. When I asked him how the husbands of the Boston women reformers felt about their wives' work, he replied, quizzically: "Observe me, my dear, and draw your conclusions. We simply attend the closer to our own business the more they attend to other people's. A balance must be struck on all questions of interference, you know."

When I met people I listened closely for evidences of unusual "culture." I was accustomed to the jargon of Parisian artist life, to the metaphysics of Germany in a small way, and now was prepared for an ethical conclusion upon all matters from Browning down to pie. Imagine my astonishment

when I found Uncle John absorbed in stocks and the pre-Raphaelite cult; aunt in managing the boards of several charitable institutions and in raising money for the purpose of furnishing newsboys with an extra pair of Sunday trousers; Elizabeth in class reunions, the inside workings of "the Pud," otherwise known as the Hasty Pudding Club of Harvard College, and two literary clubs, for which she was writing papers on "Gladstone's Policy" and "The Lassitude of the Feminine Majority," respectively; Dorothy in her dressmaker, the Country Club, balls and private theatricals, but principally in Spanish poodles and fox terriers. Everybody seemed to have an object in life, as I had expected, but what amazing hobbies some of them rode!

Dorothy canvassed canine habits as seriously as her mother governed charity organisations. I soon learned how immaterial was the subject in hand provided it were dealt with mentally and seriously. Pups, puddings, or piety were equally absorbing questions. Clothes were not a popular subject, except among individuals; they

were taken for granted, as one might easily imagine when observing the population of Boston. Conversation relative to moneyed interests was tabooed among my aunt's friends. Money, also, was taken for granted. Dollars are, in truth, a vulgar subject, and indubitably Bostonians are the most refined among Americans at that point.

My cousin Elizabeth was considerable of an athlete. Her particular friend was a girl of twenty-three who, after being graduated from the Harvard Annex, took degrees in Hebrew and mathematics at Oxford, England, for no apparent reason, but as a means to higher education in mental gymnastics. She prided herself upon entire ignorance of purely feminine occupations. Her favourite personal narrative was a story of how, upon one occasion at Oxford, she was going to some affair with a masculine fellow student. As she put on her gloves a button burst its stitches. She was in despair! Her landlady was out; what was she to do? She never had sewed on a button in her life.

The man said, "Get me a spool of thread and a needle. I will sew it on for you." She found those requisites in her landlady's sewing-basket, and stood watching the man sew on the button. This she considered a distinctly clever situation, and she never for a moment realised what any one else might think of her position in the matter, or what a disagreeable phase of modern affectation she illustrated. Aunt Drusilla came very near sniffing when she heard this story, but she was too well-connected to do that, other than mentally.

With Elizabeth and this Miss Renshaw, I began my season in Boston by frequenting the golf links at the Country Club. Miss Renshaw, being a many-time medalist at the sport, viewed my mediocre and erratic playing with open contempt for feminine incapacity. She beat "The Colonel" at every chance, and her work with the brassy competed fairly with the men's. Elizabeth and I were steeped in admiration for her skill on the putting green, but I must confess my feeling stopped short there.

Finally, after a week of preparatory partisan enthusiasm, the Harvard-Yale football game came off. Had the country been celebrating the return of heroes from a great military or naval contest, the City of Boston could not have been more excited or generally upset than by the advent of these athletic heroes. The populace, the lap-dogs, and the shops were decorated either in crimson or blue, the respective colours signifying the sympathies of the wearer. Business was carried on with divided interest. Even elderly Bostonians, who had never seen a football game until past their half-century, were eager for the fray. One suburban mother of nine boys declared in print that she sent each of her sons on to the field, regardless of broken noses, as she would have sent them into the tournaments of old, certain of their physical and moral development as the result.

By noon the electric cars running across Harvard Bridge had no standing-room left, and every Bostonian who could in conscience get to the grounds was on his way

over in traps, carriages, wagons, on bicycles and, as a last resort, on foot. We went in a party, and I was so pleased to see actual enthusiasm among a people unsuspected of that characteristic that my attention centred almost entirely upon the spectators and their ardent interest in what proved to be a one-sided and rather tame game. That night the city was given over to the gambols of the successful and defeated heroes, for in football a man is always a hero, regardless of achievements. The entire lower floor of one of the variety theatres was sold out to college men. They attended in a body, and I could not see that anybody was the better for that fact the next day; however, the lads had opportunities to do worse than they did, — may it be said to their credit, — and the fun was a part of the occasion. I felt like a grandmother among them, but my cousin and her friend treated them without exception as respected seniors, giving the boys a taste of conscious heroism none too good for their dispositions in the bosom of the family. I devoutly wished I were

eighteen, and given to hero-worship myself, for then I might have tasted the exhilaration and blood-curdling enthusiasm produced upon the majority by a Harvard or Yale football team.

A day or so later I had a novel experience. Walking alone on the Beacon Street extension, I felt something run past me attired in white linen trousers, falling far short of the knee, and an armless, throatless shirt or sweater. One after another of these scantily dressed male creatures passed me by on the run. I had about decided to tell an approaching policeman that the inmates of some lunatic asylum were running away, when I was picked up by Elizabeth, in the carriage, and she explained that the men were the Hare and Hounds Club, taking a run across country. Later I discovered that these lightly clad individuals, with no hats and with bare legs, were to be encountered at any moment in the streets of New Boston. One soon gets over the shock.

Upon one other subject besides football all Bostonians seemed to find common

ground — the Symphony Concerts. I soon found that the Symphony Orchestra was, after proper ancestry, the most universal pride and boast of Boston and its suburbs. The only Bostonian I ever knew who saw his home from the outside warned me to observe what he called "the blossom of Puritanism, the Boston face," upon the first occasion of my hearing the Orchestra. As usual, in Uncle John's family, the women attended the auction sale of season seats for these concerts, where enormous premiums are paid. The women do everything of that description in Boston, and the men admire their energy. Each of us had a season ticket for the public Rehearsal on Friday afternoons, which occasions are, without doubt, the most fashionable series of events in the Boston winter.

Every day I became more convinced that society, so-called, the elect few who constitute themselves "the people" of a city, was of less collective importance in Boston than in any other American city. I found that these good people lived fenced off in their Back Bay district, following a

life distinct from the heart-throbs and pulse of the city. Their very separateness debarred them from rights of leadership. Nobody else in the community cared a rap what they thought or felt except by way of gossip, and many of the actual descendants of Massachusetts forefathers had no participation in the life of the Back Bay or Beacon Hill. Exclusiveness sacrifices dominance to the pleasure of "me and my son, John."

Boston does not develop its character through the medium of its aristocracy alone. It is the most democratic city in America, if not in the world. It is both the cradle and nurse of independence. Evidences of these truths were set forth in the costumes of the feminine majority in evidence at that first Symphony Rehearsal I attended. All of fashionable Boston was present, and still the audience did not look fashionable from a metropolitan standpoint.

There were so many women! If you could hear the plaint of that exclamation you would understand at once how oppressive in its preponderance is the femininity

of Boston. "Woman" is stamped on every inch of Massachusetts ground. She is as inevitable as the seasons. She is more difficult to escape than the Mormon eye. She inculcates and illustrates the principles of freedom all the way from her emancipation creed to the shape of her waist and the length of her stride.

Boston Music Hall is a unique edifice. One is tempted to attribute its existence to that same Puritanical spirit which urged the Pilgrims into a form of worship bare of ornamentation: there must be no "fixings" to distract the worshipper from his purpose. So with Music Hall: nothing could be uglier; no interior could be more barren and unproductive of æsthetic feeling. Imagine a building, holding several thousand people, built at the intersection of what in other cities would be called the four alleys of a block. This building is stiff, grimy and unattractive, without ornament inside or out. The Rehearsal is merely the first of two concerts given weekly during the season except at intervals when the Orchestra is away "concertising."

The hour set for the Rehearsal is half-past two. At half-past one the doors are surrounded by a crowd of musical students and others struggling for a first place in line. When the doors open there ensues what looks like a panic in a burning building. Each one in the tussle grasps his admission ticket, worth twenty-five cents, and certifying a seat in the second balcony reserved for that purpose, or a few square inches on the floor for one's feet in any part of the house. Most of this eager throng carry books with which to occupy themselves during the long wait before them, and quite evidently as a means of defence during the scramble for the best seats. I doubt that the fine new Music Hall now in process of erection will seem as dear to the student's heart as this shabby hall filled with memories.

At half-past two the doors invariably close upon a packed house. Men and women stand during the entire programme, sandwiched side by side, and with no support but their enthusiasm. This audience alone suggests youth. Everywhere else

THE SYMPHONY REHEARSAL.

in Boston the people seem to have been born mature, but at the Rehearsal, although the Boston face is in the majority, hundreds of young girls, clad in their brightest and best, give a butterfly effect to the assembly not visible in the countenance of the individual. The Symphony men have sauntered into their places upon a plain, barren platform by the time the clock, stationed opposite upon the first balcony, indicates five minutes before half-past two. There is a social murmur all over the house. The hands of the clock point to silence. The conductor walks out on the stage amid an immediate lull of voices and a conservative hand-clap. He bows, turns about, raises his baton, quiet reigns over the multitude, the stick falls, and the remarkable body of men begin their story of beauty conveyed by every shade of emotional colour, artistic insight, and technical perfection possible to *ensemble* playing. The audience is wrapped in this atmosphere for nearly two hours. No one enjoys, in the ordinary acceptation of that term, but every one respects, exalts, bends

the knee, imbibes — yea, even unto a state of worship known at Beyreuth. And that is why Boston is the most musical city in America.

CHAPTER II

NO one can understand the force of the trite saying that the wind is tempered to the shorn lamb everywhere but on Boston Common until one has put oneself in the place of the lamb on that spot, or on any other point of attack in Boston. No wind is so lowering to the moral tone, so destructive of wits and promotive of temper, as a northeast tempest in the autumn, or the whirlwind intermitting its fury every five minutes from January until May in Boston.

It was in November that I started out for my first contest on foot with a Boston nor'easter. Knowing full well Aunt Drusilla's disinclination to get the horses wet, — no matter what became of the individual, as is the prevailing attitude toward horses in Boston and other places, — I determined to walk the half mile leading to the Public

Library, not being timid about any weather I had hitherto encountered. Well protected in rain clothes that I had found sufficient even in Scotland, I started out to do some reading on my own specialty in the quiet, studious reading-rooms of the crowning possession of Boston, — its library.

After taking a few steps along the sidewalks I began to compare myself to the shorn lamb; after walking two blocks I experienced the exaltation of a martyr. The wind came from every direction, even from under my feet. I was lifted from the ground and pitched against the corner of a house. My umbrella succumbed judiciously at the start; it turned wrong side out and broke a rib, indicating my probable condition if I pursued the enterprise. I dragged the remains by my side, holding on to my hat, and brushing my dishevelled hair out of my eyes with the other hand. Then the rain fell upon me with the force of a dozen shower baths, reminding me of the Englishman who insisted he had never seen rain until he reached Boston. Fortunately, I was nearing my destination,

and proving at the same time that grit strengthens with use, as does every other attribute.

The climax of my woes came when my boot lace untied and began to flap around my ankles, tripping me up at close intervals. This was unendurable. I stopped at a stoop, unmindful of possible spectators, emphatically and with explosive wrath dropped the remains of my umbrella on the lower step, muttering to myself while my hair streamed before my eyes, damp and draggled with the rain; then, planting one foot on the sidewalk, the other on the second step of the stoop, I tried to tie the string as deliberately as possible under the circumstances. Needless to say, the string was refractory. My face turned red, my temper boiled over, and I fear I stamped. Just then I looked higher than my foot, up toward the drawing-room windows of the house, and met the eyes of a man standing there, evidently enjoying my demonstration. His amused expression lent me the courage of indignation. I returned to the attack, succeeded,

and marched on without another look upward, but showing an indignant back. At that moment I received an indelible impression of the Boston man.

At any other place in the world a man would have come to my rescue with the offer of an umbrella; but this one knew nothing about my family, consequently it would have been improper for him to offer assistance to me as a disconnected woman in distress. I had noticed this tendency toward vacuous indifference in all the Boston men I had met, but laid it to the excess of female adulation consequent upon a proportion of one man to every twenty-five women; now I knew it was something deeper, something probably hereditary, explained by the expression of "no intentions," adopted generally by the male members of the Boston population. I realised at once how much I despised that man, and how I longed to teach him and his fellow citizens a few lessons. However, my further struggles with the elements kept me employed until I reached the library, after a collision with a pedestrian walking

with an umbrella held open horizontally, thus obscuring his vision. He made no apology, but, giving me an annihilating glance, staggered on.

Even in a nor'easter the Boston Library and the other buildings skirting Copley Square bear out their reputation. According to the verdict of architects, they combine to form the most interesting square architecturally in America. On a bright day in autumn a colourist revels in the brilliant-hued ivy massed upon the cosy church and adjacent residences bordering one side of the square in harmony with the soft brown tones of wonderful Trinity Church diagonally opposite. Those in search of pure lines find content in the classic form of the library, emphasised by contrast with the Art Museum and the latter-day edition of the historic Old South Church, whose congregation, after several removals, has settled in new Boston, a long distance from the original site of the church. Copley Square may justly be called the head of Boston; exactly where its heart lies no one knows positively.

After drying out in the periodical reading-room, I forgot myself in my satisfaction with everything about me. I walked back to the entrance for another look at Sir Harry Vane standing in his niche, — only a cavalier in bronze, but even so, replete with a grace, nobility, and charm I had failed so far to find in any other Bostonian. I felt sure he would not have left me on his stoop to wrestle unassisted with confounding conditions. Up the noble stairway, guarded by couchant lions, I then went, sitting down for a few admiring moments to rest my eyes upon the soft-tinted marbles and the mural pictures of Puvis de Chavannes on one side, and on the other the court where the misunderstood Bacchante poised for a short time in all of her unsurpassed loveliness. I saw her but once, and have only an exquisite memory of the most perfect modelling and incarnate loveliness ever rejected by exponents of frozen virtue. Having the afternoon before me, I took the elevator for another period of enjoyment before Sargent's decorations, unequalled, in my

THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY.

opinion, by any of the other choice possessions of the library. One learns the history of religion from the humanitarian standpoint in a study of Sargent's strong execution of a thoughtful conception. His prophets are inspired men, not grotesque supernatural beings.

I was especially interested in Sargent's work because, a few months previous, I had dined in London with some particular friends of his. My hostess told me how one day Sargent came to them in a mood of artistic despair, insisting that he had conceived an idea beyond his powers of execution. He explained, then gloomily insisted that he was going home to destroy the entire batch of drawings. They pleaded with him not to do so until they had seen them. He consented, and, spurred on by their encouragement, finished his noble design. This remembrance gave me food for long thought as I stood before that splendid expression of a great man's greatest idea, developed through a lifetime.

Time was moving on, and before going down-stairs I saw more of interest in vari-

ous rooms than I could well digest in an afternoon. In the delivery-room, later, I looked again at Edwin Abbey's graceful narrative of the pursuit of the "Holy Grail," in a series of mural paintings. His work is highly decorative, but the story has been better told before, through the same medium of expression. It seemed to me that every American should be proud of the Boston Library, with its democratic inscription across the exterior front: "The Public Library of the City of Boston. Built by the People and Dedicated to the Advancement of Learning."

I found the books I wanted in Bates Hall, and settled myself for an hour's indulgence in my private hobby, which I keep concealed from the general eye as closely as I would veil a sin, for I have a horror of seeming masculine. Wishing to keep my place in one book of reference, while I took another down from the shelf near by, I looked around for a book-mark, but none was to be seen. Opening my money purse, the only object I saw that would answer the purpose was a small

photograph of myself, which I carried to please my mother while away from her, for the purpose of identification in case of murder or sudden death, both of which possibilities were ever present to her mind. I slipped the photograph into the place. The book fell to of its own weight. I moved a few steps away and reached for another book. At that moment a hand fell on my shoulder with a masculine force, and in a deep-voiced whisper — no audible speech being permitted in the hall — some one said:

"*Bon jour, mon enfant!* How in the name of all that's wonderful did you ever arrive at the Hub?"

Upon looking back rather startled, I saw the face of the strangest woman I ever knew. Yes, it certainly was Frances Thurlston, whom I had known two years before in Paris, where I spent nearly a year with my mother's sister. To any one who knew Frances it would be needless to say she was an unmarried woman. She is the only professed man-hater in whose professions I put any faith. Probably

the most masculine of women herself, she merely tolerated the sex whose ways she imitated as her choice between two evils. She said it was a good thing to be a man, but the worst thing possible to endure a man. Frances must have been forty-five, at least, at that time. She came as near being an artist as any one could who escaped. She did many things well without excelling in any one thing, except criticism of other people's work. Among the artists in Paris she was considered the ablest woman critic who had ever lent her keen insight to their acceptance or rejection. She wrote in a bold, vigorous style; she painted better than an amateur; she played several instruments fairly well; but inherited means had killed her artistically. She was rich; necessity is the mainspring of genius. Frances had no living relative except a married sister, of whom she spoke occasionally. For women she cared in almost a masculine way. I had been one of her fancies the winter I spent in Paris. Her tailor-made broadcloth costumes, worn with white shirt-fronts and standing collars,

emphasised her large-featured, boyish face as did her manly attitudes — whether affected or natural I never knew. They were always the same.

Drawing in a surprised breath, I exclaimed aloud: "Did you fall with the rain or come in the wind?"

"'Sh!" she answered, cautioning me. "Don't talk out loud in here. Come into the corridor and we'll have it out." Forgetful of books and photographs, I gathered together my belongings and followed her. We settled ourselves in one of the marble embrasure seats overlooking the court near the lions. She began: "You're looking the equal of yourself. How did you get here?"

I told her my situation.

"Going in for the 'smart set,' are you?" was all she replied, disdainfully. "I never thought you belonged there — you have too much of the real thing in you. Know Mrs. Bobby Short and the Hazeltine Greshams, I suppose, and the rest. They try hard to change the temperature of Boston, but nothing will, under another century

of new blood. It's only a big town affecting city airs, just as a country girl dresses to go to the village."

I confessed that I had met the people she mentioned, but that Aunt Drusilla seemed to belong to another set.

"Humph!" she replied. "Old Beacon Hill holding up her skirts for fear of contagion. The truth is, Mrs. Robert Short does more toward the advancement of this place in civilisation than a whole woman's clubful of the rest. She educates striving artists, loans her valuable books and pictures upon every occasion, and does a deal of good with one hand the other doesn't know about."

"Then why do the Boston women have so much to say about her?" I asked.

"Jealous!" Frances grunted. "Did you ever hear of that failing? The fact is, Mrs. Short is not really in her proper sphere in life, any more than I should be in her shoes. She is an artist, every inch of her. She feels some of the truths we are all seeking in beauty-land. If she weren't manacled by a masculine attach-

ment I dare say she would live as I do. There is just the same thing the matter with her there is with me — nothing more. I live my life as I like; she is compelled to temporise and meet 'The Hub' half way. I met her once in Rome and liked her; most people do. I say, Margaret, I'm glad you aren't locked to a masculine attachment yet!"

I assured her of my lingering freedom, and insisted upon knowing something about herself.

"I'm a poor subject of conversation," she growled, amiably. "Nothing to tell. Same life. After the crowd broke up in Paris last year, I got a working fever on. Decided I'd let it off in the land of 'freaks,' the only city I belong to in America. My sister lives here, too, and one must see one's kin once a century. She's Mrs. Howard Drake. Know her?"

Yes, I had met her. Was she visiting her sister?

"Visiting! I visit?" she returned. "You know me better than that! I haven't stopped over night with anybody

in twenty years. No! I have an apartment with a studio, and I'm digging. You may not believe it, but my fever hasn't worked off in a year. If I could lose my money now I'd be famous yet. You come along with me. I've a cab down-stairs. Come home with me and see my picture. I found a model in the North End equal to a little Florentine I had once at Julien's years ago. Then you must come to one of my 'Sundays' and meet some 'freaks.' You know I always gather my own kind about me. There are plenty of them in Boston."

That night at dinner I told of my meeting with a friend I had known in Paris, going somewhat into details in regard to her personality. Uncle said, "A manly female, I should judge. I have rooted objections to the species." Elizabeth turned her slow eyes upon me with the question, "What does she do?"

"Pretty much everything but go into society, which she calls a large dish of 'giggle, gabble, gobble, git,' quoting Doctor Holmes."

"I should like to study a person possessing those characteristics," replied Elizabeth earnestly.

"Margaret," spoke up Aunt Drusilla, "I hardly think your mother would care to have you pursue the acquaintance of such a person in America. Such acquaintances may do for the other side, but not in Boston. A woman of no connections —"

"Pardon me!" I interrupted, playing my trump card, "but Miss Thurlston is a sister to Mrs. Howard Drake."

"The Howard Drakes of Marlborough Street?" inquired Aunt Drusilla, looking interested. "That is altogether different. Howard Drake's mother was an Osgood of Beacon Hill, and further back her mother lived near us on Summer Street. I remember Frances Osgood's great-grandfather's portrait, painted in the costume of an English officer of the Guards. The Osgoods were not Revolutionary patriots, but they were of distinguished English connections. Would you care to call upon Margaret's friend, Elizabeth? I never visit strangers, you know. I have not even visited my

cousin, Mary Norris, in Brookline, for ten years. It is such a journey out there, and my life is so fully occupied with larger duties."

Elizabeth replied that she would be pleased to know Miss Thurlston, provided "her day" did not interfere with club work, or the Symphony, or the Cambridge Conferences, or a new course of lectures on Browning, or a dozen other plans arranged for the winter.

"What are the Cambridge Conferences?" I asked.

Uncle John replied, with the laughing light I had seen in his eyes once or twice before: "They are seats of learning, my dear, where prophets ladle out culture with spoons called ethics, and the congregation worships Buddha."

"John!" said Aunt Drusilla, severely, "how can you speak jestingly of one of the finest institutions in Cambridge? The Conferences, Margaret, we attend on Sunday afternoons for the purpose of broadening ourselves along all ethical lines of thought. These meetings are deeply inter-

esting. Elizabeth rarely misses one, and I know she will be glad to take you as her guest."

"Yes, you must not fail to go, my dear," returned Uncle John, as he left us for the library, where he spent most of his evenings alone. "Of course, Elizabeth only goes for the ethics, but one of her friends told me it was 'perfectly fine,' that 'lots of young professors and other college men go, and we have a jolly time afterward.' You can sleep through the meeting in anticipation of 'afterward,' Margaret. That is the way I enjoy myself at ethical societies."

Uncle John went out, Aunt Drusilla looked resigned, and Elizabeth picked up a book.

The next day I opened my pocketbook, and for the first time remembered I had left my photograph in the library book. Not for several days could I find time to get to the library, owing to our excess of engagements. In two days I attended the New England Woman's Club, where the members no longer knit and crochet in-

formally while the programme goes on, as in former days, but attend strictly to literary business according to parliamentary law; another Symphony Rehearsal, a dinner, a lecture at a private house upon the architecture of the Renaissance, a luncheon, and a weekly "at home" of an author who never makes calls, but receives in salon fashion, once a week, anybody who chooses to attend her gatherings, which are full of variety and the kind of persiflage one reads in the novels one does not understand. This lady was well connected; therefore, although she lived in a socially decadent part of town, Elizabeth was permitted to mix with the great variety of human beings to be met at her house, and to introduce me there. London was in the air, at this house. Nearly everybody had spent some time there, and I found a number of writers and painters who knew English friends of mine. I can safely say that half hour was the most interesting I had spent socially in Boston. It was neither stiff, nor pedantic, nor frisky. Finally, when I went for my photograph, it was

not to be found. There was no picture in the book of reference I had used; could some one have carried it off? I was annoyed at my indiscretion, but spilt milk is never worth crying over. In a few days I forgot all about the incident, having mentioned it to no one.

Before this I had discovered, by observation and conversation, that Boston dances, dinners, and teas were about the same as those one attends in any other city, with this difference: professional people were to be met everywhere in Boston. Artists are not patronised there; they are fraternised, and included socially without passing an examination upon ancestry, as are no other outsiders. Greatly to the credit of Boston stands this fact. Brains and talent will pass muster where no amount of money can among Bostonians, unless it be with those who are ancestry ridden. No doubt they make this recognition somewhat of a pose, but underneath that attitude there is an honest admiration of ability. The majority of people occupied with the arts have small time or inclination for society *per se;*

but if by chance they have social tendencies, and are equipped with real ability and fairly good manners, they can gratify these instincts in Boston where millionaires without the requisites pass unheeded.

Frances Thurlston said she could not see why, as far as business occupations went, Boston had higher claims than Chicago. "For my part, I cannot see any refined difference between pork and leather. One is the inside of an animal, the other the outside," she insisted. But, notwithstanding this fact, I noticed that Frances chose Boston as a place of residence while in America.

Mr. Warren Hartwell had returned from Europe and called several times by the first week in December. Aunt Drusilla found him almost as absorbing a topic of conversation as reforms. Dorothy spoke of him in the tone of a near relative, but Elizabeth seldom mentioned him. Finally, one night at a dance at Dorothy's, Mr. Hartwell and I held our first conversation alone. I said to him: "There is a familiar look about you, Mr. Hartwell. Have I met

you somewhere before, or has my aunt's admiration of you thrown a sub-conscious picture on my brain?"

"Where could we have met?" he asked, with a strangely knowing smile. Then, without waiting for a reply, he continued: "I feel that same certainty of having seen you before. There is something familiar about the eyes."

I changed the subject, because I did not understand his apparent amusement, inexplicable to me. Soon he asked how I liked Boston.

"When you ask me that," I replied, "I feel as the foreigner must as he lands at New York, besieged to give his impressions of America before he has seen anything but the Statue of Liberty."

"But you have been here several weeks. That I can certify," he replied, again looking amused.

"Oh, yes, all of a month," I said, beginning to be provoked by his covert smiles. "I am reserving my impressions to put in a book, provided I have imbibed enough atmosphere to produce one when I leave

in the spring. So far I have only one distinct impression: hatred of one Boston man whom I do not know."

"Is the gentleman anonymous? A great unknown?" Mr. Hartwell inquired.

"He is anonymous and unknown to me, but not altogether a gentleman. He saw me in distress and only laughed. You know the Boston laugh is frequently misunderstood by strangers."

"Perhaps you did not give this especially unfortunate Bostonian an opportunity to assist you," Mr. Hartwell replied, with his grand air balanced by a sudden lighting of his indifferent eyes. He was a man whom everybody called interesting, but no one could define the source of this element in him. His eyes looked indifferent and tired unless he was interested; altogether his face was unfathomable, his power elusive. He nettled me, and still I did not dislike him.

"A man should make and seize his opportunity, not wait for women to beseech him, after the Boston fashion," I replied, rather discourteously, I fear.

"Give him another chance, Miss Allston. Bostonians are open to improvement, you know. By the way, do you like the Boston weather?"

I looked up at him quickly, astonished that such a man, after five minutes, should be reduced to the weather as a topic of conversation. Dorothy coming up, I made no reply; but again I noticed his unreasonable smile.

After that Mr. Hartwell and I met constantly. Aunt Drusilla assured me that Warren was the best-connected man of the younger set in Boston. "Everybody expected him to marry into one of the old families," she continued, significantly. Happening to glance at Elizabeth during this explanation, I saw a slow blush cover her face and neck, whether of anger or something else I could not tell. Elizabeth always seemed to me to be one of the inevitable spinsters. She was "an old maid" at ten years of age, but now she was also a woman of refinement and large pedantic intelligence. No doubt beneath her calm exterior she quivered at her

mother's lightly veiled references to Warren Hartwell.

As Frances Thurlston said, if I depended upon Bostonians to show me Boston, I would go away in deep ignorance of the city, for the reason that every division of the inhabitants knows exclusively its own Boston. None of my relations had ever been to the top of Bunker Hill Monument, but they had climbed the Alps; nor were they familiar with many of the other features of their city relegated to tourists. Boston has not only the most beautiful and interesting suburbs of any city in America, but it contains also more concentric circles of humanity than I have found elsewhere in this country. Each circle touches another at some point. The South End is like a young man who, starting out in life with brilliant prospects and making an utter failure of himself, gradually and reluctantly falls below the point of respectability. The North End, in reality historic Boston, is now the Italian and Jewish quarter, whence the police gather their most exciting reports, and

where artists go for picturesque humanity, — soiled and temperamental. Some other sections are the byword for uninteresting respectability. Then there is the Back Bay, the fashionable quarter, built upon slippery ground, so to speak, considering that the whole district west of the Public Gardens is made ground.

What a calamity if Boston should awake some morning to find its prominent citizens vanished, — "sunk into the unknowable," as they would say at the Cambridge Conferences, houses and all! Much sterling worth and unlimited snobbery would be disposed of simultaneously, but the city in all probability would soon supply other prominent citizens of shorter pedigree, and the gap might be filled with more earth and them. Still, the character of the present Back Bay would be irrevocably lost.

These matters were all explained to me by Frances, who knew thoroughly every city in which she lived. I would run away from the limitations of the Back Bay for frequent expeditions into the remainder of the city under her guidance.

The poetic Indian summer, which lasted at intervals far into December, enticed us constantly out-of-doors. We drove over great stretches of the firmest, smoothest roads to be found in the environments of any city. Brookline seemed to me a haven of beautiful content, with its fine old trees and homes of various kinds, from places built on the plan and in the proportions of an English manor-house, surrounded by acres of grounds, to cosy modern houses, of good architecture generally speaking; one and all quite apparently homes, — the effect one searches for and misses in Boston proper.

One day Frances and I were walking along Columbus Avenue, looking neither to the right nor left, when two men approached. I noticed one touch the other, who laughed coarsely and addressed us with "Good day, ain't it?" both slowing up. I showed such astonishment that Frances whispered, "Look ahead! Don't speak!"

We walked on silently. The men laughed again, but passed on. When we turned into

Dartmouth Street, Frances delivered herself: "I meet more of that in this town than in any city in the world, not excepting Paris. By five o'clock Saturday afternoon, men begin to reel through the streets, and Sunday is a day of dissipation among the lower classes. I can't tell you how often I — yes, a middle-aged woman — have been spoken to in the last month on the street in the daytime. Boston is only an overgrown college town; but these beasts one meets on the street are not college chaps, and nobody seems to know who or what they are. A woman is never in danger anywhere if she behaves herself, but she is open to extreme annoyance, and there can be no denying that Boston streets are invaded by an army of the most disagreeable pests."

Frances never made a direct statement that she could not substantiate. She told one of the truths which no Bostonian will admit except on compulsion.

Columbus Avenue, the street where this disagreeable episode occurred, might be called an asylum for Boston freaks. In

its palmy days, the residences lining Columbus Avenue's asphalt pavement were built and occupied by Boston citizens claiming, incipiently, New York's spirit of go and glitter. They laid out a broad avenue after the manner of the New York social mart, building imitative brownstone fronts as homes, and attempting, unsuccessfully, to turn the tide of fashion away from Beacon Street. Some of these imitative people, with dogged pride, still live in the brownstone fronts. But the major part of the houses on Columbus Avenue are let out by the room, or rooms, to human phenomena in the shape of professors of every sleight-of-hand science known to modern folk. On that avenue one can find sovereign cures for every human affliction, all done after some patent method especially attractive to Bostonians.

Running off of this avenue are the most interesting domestic squares in Boston. The homes date from the beginning of the South End, and are mostly of English urban architecture, with low stoops. These houses are built of brick enriched in colour

by time, and during six months of the year embowered in ivy. A refreshing plot of green grass and trees runs between the curved line of houses, and all is quiet, restful, and dignified. Carts do not rumble, rarely does an equipage pass, children do not shout, and what strata of society occupies these remote sanctuaries in the heart of a throbbing city it is difficult to determine when even the policemen have no convincing information to give pertaining thereto.

CHAPTER III

THE day before Christmas a snow fell, fine and powdery, over which one could imagine Saint Nick speeding behind "eight tiny reindeer," lively and quick, generous and hearty.

Aunt Drusilla told us that when she was a child gifts were exchanged, if at all in New England, at Thanksgiving. Christmas was a religious day, and she recalled one year when, as a girl of fifteen, she made some little gift to her father during the holiday season, as she had known a young friend to do, and was reprimanded for her conduct.

"You girls do not realise what a change has come over the spirit of Boston since I was a child," she said. "In those days parents were prominent members of a family; the children, of little consequence.

TREMONT STREET MALL IN WINTER.

When I came out I was given a ball, but the married people were conspicuous in the gathering; not merely a few frisky married women called chaperons, but fine ladies and gentlemen of all ages. Young girls were to be seen, not heard. Nowadays the girls go to dances alone in their parents' carriage, with no protector but a coachman and footman picked up from dear knows where, servants are so transient and unreliable in our time. Or several girls will take a public carriage together, and ladies of my age are not even invited."

"They would be glad to have you go, mama-r, if you would only talk about somethin' they understand. People don't want to discuss their souls or other people's souls at a dance," said Dorothy, tormenting her Spanish poodle by making thrusts at him with a paper-cutter.

"No, they prefer, as does one of my daughters, to talk scandal and the French slang of the Latin Quarter," replied Aunt Drusilla, gathering her gray silk shawl about her shoulders with an offended air.

"What an idea-r, mama-r!" replied Dorothy. "We talk books, pictures, music, and art — with a big A — until I frequently wish we really knew what we were talkin' about.

"Have you noticed, Margaret, that the people who actually do somethin' in Boston talk very little about it? I'll take you with me to the Lesters', on the Hill. Of course, you have read Mr. Lester's books, or if you haven't you must read one before we go. Quote an author to his face and he is your friend. Mr. Hartwell goes there a lot. He thinks the Lester set the only one worth knowin' in Boston. The Lesters go everywhere, — they are very well connected, both here and in London, — and on their day one sees a lot of writers and such people there who never condescend to come to me or to mama-r."

"Dorothy, you put on a wrong 'r' then," I said.

"The idea-r!" she exclaimed; "I never do that."

"You did it then again," I replied, laughing.

"Where? I don't believe it. You told me I called the singer Melbar, Melba-r, when I know I say Melba-r."

"You certainly do say Melba-r, Dorothy. You are as deaf to superfluous r's as the rest of New England. Console yourself with the reflection of a Massachusetts farmer who once said to me: 'Well, I cal'late if r's is put on in places they ain't used to, outside of New England, it's because them other folks don't know nothin' 'bout usin' 'em.'"

Dorothy laughed good-naturedly. "I can hear that we drop our g's, but I can't hear any difference in our pronunciation of the word 'idea-r,' any more than Elizabeth can hear the nasal sound in her voice."

This conversation took place the day before Christmas, and we decided not to go to the Lesters' until after the holidays, which were already filled with engagements. After this decision had been reached, Dorothy jumped up, exclaiming: "Here I sit when I have an appointment to meet Warren Hartwell at a jeweler's! I promised to help him with his Christmas

shoppin'. Come on, girls. Don't you want to go along?"

Elizabeth had promised to drive with her mother, whose day was occupied in directing the dispensation of charities contributed by the various societies and associations she represented. I started off with Dorothy, whose carriage was at the door. As we drove down-town, Dorothy said, with her rather wicked smile: "See here, Madgie, it seems to me you are runnin' Elizabeth and the other girls rather close with Warren. He tells me you have shown him how weak-minded it is to sit half the day at the Somerset or Puritan Club and spend the other half in 'innocuous desuetude.' He is really a clever chap, but lack of necessity has ruined his ambition. Perhaps you have stirred him up, for he goes to his office every day now. But I say, Madgie, don't you think you were indiscreet to give him your photograph so early in the day? I'm no prig like mama-r, but there is a limit, you know."

"I don't know what you are talking about, Dorothy," I returned, feeling as

stiff as I must have looked. "I neither have designs on the only eligible man there seems to be in Boston society, nor have I given him my photograph."

"Now don't get snippy about it, my dea-r. I'm only Dorothy; you mustn't mind me. I'm not scoldin'. I should be only too glad to have Warren for a cousin, but I don't like his showin' your photograph —"

"Showing my photograph! Where?"

"At the club the other day. Fred heard of it through some of the men, and he didn't like it one bit."

"Where did he get my photograph?" I demanded.

"That's the question," she replied.

"Well, as I am not a professional beauty nor an actress, nor do I do anything, my pictures are not for sale; so I think Fred must be mistaken."

"Then you did not give it to him?"

"I give it to him! I thought you knew me better than that, Dorothy."

"I thought so myself, Madgie," she said, soothingly.

"Perhaps it is a mistake. I'll speak about it to Fred again."

We were silent a moment; then I said: "Put me down here, Dorothy. I do not wish to meet Mr. Hartwell until Fred finds out the truth of this affair."

"Never mind, — " she began.

"Set me down at once. I'll walk the rest of the way and do some shopping while I cool off. I respected Mr. Hartwell more than any other man I have met here."

She stopped the coachman and set me down, expressing regret, and promising to probe the matter through her husband. I walked very fast through the Public Gardens and Common, a fairyland of light flaky snow that had fallen the night before, loading the trees with the garments of the Snow Queen, — a wonderful sight! But even the beauty of the Common could not turn my thoughts from the revelation just made me. Warren Hartwell and I had become sincere friends even in that short while. I forgave him his indifference and hereditary Bostonianisms because of many counter-attractions. He

"A FAIRYLAND OF LIGHT FLAKY SNOW."

seemed to forgive my lack of those qualities for somewhat the same reason. I did not understand him always, nor did he mean that I should. In the midst of an intelligent conversation he would say, languidly, "What do you think of the Boston weather by this time, Miss Allston?" while from under his half-closed lids there came a look reminding me of that mocking tone in his voice. At first I thought the weather must be his hobby, but he never talked on that subject with any one else in my hearing; then I decided that weather was the weak spot in his brain, as some scientists think we all have one, and finally I refused to answer him, which made his laugh more frequent and disagreeable.

One Sunday morning we were walking together on Commonwealth Avenue with the stream of fashionable pedestrians returning home from church, when Mr. Hartwell suddenly asked: "Did any one ever show you how to tie a boot lace so that it will stay?"

"Yes," I replied; "many people have, with poor results."

"If you will permit me I will show you some day how to make a warranted knot. You might find it useful in case of rain."

"This is some more book talk, I suppose," I returned, looking at him quickly. "Subterranean meanings in pure literary form."

"Not at all. John Bradley is the man for that sort of thing. Most women complain of boot laces when walking far. Did you never have one come untied on the street in the rain or snow? I have."

"Yes, indeed, I have, to my disgust." Then I remembered my experience of more than a month before, and told him about it, and why I hated one Bostonian so much.

He smiled lazily several times during the narrative, and admitted that "the man must have been a cad." At the end of my story he remarked: "Try to forgive him. He was a Bostonian, and couldn't help it."

"Do you know that man?" I asked, suspiciously.

"I know nearly all the men about. But

A STORMY DAY FOR CHRISTMAS SHOPPERS.

he has never spoken to me of the circumstance if I do know him, so I cannot say."

Now, as I thought of what Dorothy had told me, my mind at once reverted to that talk, and I hated him almost as much as I did the other man.

How gay the crowded streets were! Tremont and Washington Streets, with their narrow sidewalks, from which the hurrying crowds overflowed into the streets, were resplendent with holiday wares upon which the sun shone gaily. Some one pounded me on the chest with the end of a parcel; then a fat woman brushed between a large man and me, sending him into the gutter. Few apologise on Washington Street. Apologies are either taken for granted, or not intended, on the busy streets of Boston.

Presently the crowd came to a standstill before a Santa Claus in a shop window. I could not move one way or another. A man came out of a stairway against which I was pressed. The crowd threw me against him. "I beg your pardon," said a familiar voice above my shoulder. Look-

ing up in surprise at the apology, I found myself fairly thrown into the arms of Warren Hartwell.

"Miss Allston!" he exclaimed. "Are you hurt? What are you doing here in this mob?"

"I couldn't help it," I replied. "They pushed me against you. Dorothy is waiting for you at the jeweler's."

"Aren't you coming, too?" he asked.

"No," I replied, coldly. "Hurry, or you will keep her waiting."

Just then the crowd parted and I slipped away from him without another word. I walked on down Washington Street past the Old South Meeting-house and as far as Newspaper Row; then back again, stopping at a book store. In there the first person I ran against was Frances Thurlston, who knew every book store by heart.

"Just the girl I want!" she exclaimed. "Are you coming to-night? It is my 'freak' night, you know, and I wish you to meet some of the people who will be there."

I promised to go, provided the girls had made no other engagement for me.

"My sister is coming to-night, with your friend, Mr. Warren Hartwell, in tow," said Frances, as she gave what she called "a Boston punch" with her elbow to a woman who tried to walk over us in her attempt to secure a clerk.

That afternoon I went with Dorothy and Elizabeth to a piano recital given by one of Mrs. Bobby Short's numerous protégées, assisted by one of the most interesting song singers in Boston. The recital was held in the De Medici room of The Tuileries and was more or less a charitable affair, aside from its advertising purposes. There are more good recitals in Boston during the season than any one could possibly enjoy; consequently the friends or patrons of the musicians signify to their friends how much under obligation they will be placed to any one buying tickets to these subscription concerts.

When the well-seasoned professional holds forth at the attractive little subterranean hall called Steinert's, he takes more

chances with the public, and generally, with a few particular, popular exceptions, suffers the consequences; for chamber music, aside from the Kneisel Quartette's performances, goes begging in Boston, as it does in all American cities. Of course, Mrs. Bobby Short was there, as gracious and as independent of public opinion as ever. She was surrounded by several masculine artistic satellites, all of whom she had assisted toward an honest living in some way or another, thus causing the public tongue to wag its easily greased muscles. Her particular friends were there, and a few others, like Elizabeth and myself.

The same reverent hearing was given this performance that I had observed at other musical entertainments in Boston, where the average intelligence is unquestionably beyond that of other American cities. When the trite, misrepresented word "culture" is concerned there is little to be said in favour of Boston, as contrasted with other places; but, with the best school system we have in our country, the finest

library, and a large percentage of hereditary intelligence to begin on, it would be surprising and mortifying if the average intelligence were not high.

Dorothy whispered to me, before the performance began: "Warren Hartwell asked me what was the matter with you this mornin' —"

The pianist appeared. I put my finger on my lips, indicating silence, and heard nothing more of Mr. Hartwell.

Christmas greens hung in bright quantities every place we went that day. When I reached Frances Thurlston's in time for a cosy dinner with her alone, before the "freaks" arrived, her apartment, too, was festooned at every available spot with holly and evergreens; but there was no mistletoe, I noticed. Our dinner together was in commemoration of a Christmas Eve spent in Paris with a gay party of English and Americans two years previous. At eight o'clock the "freaks" began to come, most of them people deprived of home life, for whom Frances was making a bit of Christmas cheer, although she

would have denied the sentimental accusation. She was a good hostess, usually touching the best side of every one.

A few of these people I had met before. They were nearly all local celebrities in some especial way.

Frances told me that if any one asked me how I liked the climate, to reply, "The east winds give me a tendency to rheumatism." She had no time to explain, for the guests began to arrive; but when, a few moments later, I found myself talking to a middle-aged woman with a kind face and pussy-cat manners, wearing a costume representing several different periods of fashion, and she asked me if Boston satisfied my ideal, I replied: "Certainly the east winds do; they give me a rheumatic tendency."

"And you so young!" she exclaimed, reproachfully. "My dear child, you have no rheumatism — you cannot have — you must not have disease. Disease is sin. You must deny it. You are God's child, made in his perfect image. You create your own sin apart from his essence, and

sin is disease. Say to it, 'out,' and it will out. Remember that only spirit lives; your body is no more than the food you eat. Come to me if you lose possession of your spirit, and I will do my part toward its resuscitation."

"Yes'm," I replied, too astonished at her outburst and at my own sin to say more.

"Promise me that you will deny sin, my dear, and — ah! Mr. Davis, so glad to see you! This is Miss Allston, our dear Miss Thurlston's guest. I was demonstrating to her how needless disease is —" She continued to expound her doctrines to a running accompaniment by Mr. Davis, who was evidently a brother in the faith, with small regard to the clothing of his flesh in anything but spirit, his costume being an ordinary business suit, creased and untidy.

Frances interrupted their talk, which was carried on entirely between themselves, while I stood by, an amused but apparently forgotten listener, by bringing up a lady, also middle-aged, but with a beautiful,

poetic, faded face. Accompanying her was a tall, thin young man with very black, searching eyes and a great deal of black hair. He said very little; he seemed to listen with his eyes. The lady, Miss Torrington, was charming.

Presently the young man, looking across the top of my head with a professional glance, said, abruptly, "See the blue lights in her hair. They fairly quiver."

Miss Torrington followed the painter's gaze, replying, with ecstatic expression: "I have seen nothing else while we talked. What tone there is! The shadows in the broad light must be superb. Green is needed somewhere, don't you think? Perhaps about the throat. Then a little distance, and what an effect! Where would you touch in the vanishing point, were you working in the wave of hair toward the ear as the point of high light?"

"I'd give her several trees and a lane in perspective, and put the figure in the middle ground, draped in whites and blues. She is a better figure than head model. The vanishing point would fall at the sky

"'SEE THE BLUE LIGHTS IN HER HAIR.'"

line of the lane, I should say. What a composition! If I could only get those hair lights! Blue! Blue!"

They, too, had forgotten me. This time I was lost in my hair, but I plucked up courage to ask, "Do you see any blue devils there? I have them, I know."

"My dear Miss Allston, you must forgive our rapt admiration of your radiant hair. My friend is a rare colourist; an artist of whom we all expect miracles. I am only a humble follower of the noble impressionist idea, but he is a true disciple, a genius." The young man himself seemed to take this all for granted.

This black-eyed impressionist now demanded, "Which do you feel the most, line or colour, Miss Allston?"

Happily I was saved from answering by a brisk young author, who flashed his wit at one with dazzling illumination. He approached, greeting us all with "Is the night gray or purple? Teaching the visitor what colour she is? I know them and like them almost as well as I do my own books, Miss Allston. This man here

assures me he sees purple in my hair. I tell him it is printer's ink, oozing out of my gray matter. Eh! Duncan?"

"I'll leave him to file his wits or boil them down on you, Miss Allston," replied the artist, with a smile, as he turned to speak to a lady who had captured Miss Torrington.

"My wits are like beef: better for cold storage. That's why I live in Boston. May I etherise time for you until you are claimed by a better man?" asked Mr. John Bradley, whose books were as popular as he himself.

"What if he should never come? He must be rare," I replied, thinking hard to keep up with him.

"Then I should insist that the majority ruled, and pledge myself to Paradise. But here comes the better man, just when he isn't wanted. He asked me to present him."

A portly gentleman afflicted with baldness approached, dressed in proper evening dress, as was the author. He spoke with a slight accent, either German or Scandi-

navian; which, I could not determine. "Miss Thurlston tells me you have lived in Paris, miss. How does this city of Puritanical atmosphere interest you? Do the east winds unsettle your moral purpose, as they bid fair to mine?"

"My morality is not in the least affected so far, but my bones are," I replied. "The east wind gives me a tendency to rheumatism."

"Ah! That is bad; but it can be mended. Have you yet learned to know of the healer we have in our midst? His theories can be traced directly to the New Testament. They are worth examining. His power is that of obsession. You know when the spirit leaves the body it is not instantly purified, but hangs between heavenly and earthly leanings. Those spirits that succumb to the remembrance of the flesh return to earth, settling in the form of disease in human beings. This man simply exorcises these evil spirits by passing his hand over the spot they inhabit —"

"Ah, come now, Gratton!" said Mr.

Bradley. "Don't tell the young lady she is possessed with devils."

"He is a mental will-o'-the-wisp, miss. He is never serious. How can we know unless we investigate? Truth is elusive. It must be probed. It is good to believe."

"Yes, if you can change your belief once a week, as you do," replied the other, smiling with that humour in his eyes condoning his frequent liberty of speech.

Before the evening was over I became so mixed in my mind, what with expressions of polite anarchy, the imminence of the socialistic idea, the importance of college settlements, and other theories hinged on to those I have quoted, that I wondered how the world could be large enough to hold them all where each man and woman overflowed with explosive ideas directed oppositely.

Mrs. Drake came late, accompanied by a musician with a handsome face, and a blasé, world-worn expression; but Mr. Hartwell did not appear.

Frances asked if I liked the rest of the "freaks" as much as I did her. I re-

TRINITY CHURCH.

plied, "'The east winds in Boston give me a rheumatic tendency.' Merry Christmas!"

Not until Christmas Day did I have a chance to talk with Dorothy alone again. My box from home and many Christmas letters made me feel like a boarding-school girl away from home during the holidays. Mr. Hartwell sent Aunt Drusilla enough roses to bank a mantel, but not a sprig to either Elizabeth or me. He dined with us that day, as his only near relative, a married sister, was spending several months at Aiken, where many Bostonians go for health and gaiety. I attended service Christmas morning with Uncle John at Trinity Church, whose great domed interior, harmonious tones, and peaceful sanctity called to my mind the character of the man whose grand dimensions of mind, soul, and body had unconsciously built the glory of this edifice as a monument to his own noble endeavours in behalf of humanity. I never heard Phillips Brooks preach, but one autumn I crossed from Liverpool in the same boat with him, and before we

were out a day every one on board felt the presence of a great soul in our midst, — a soul so childlike in its own purity, so manly in its strength, that no man nor woman could be other than his or her best in its uplifting presence.

When we walked home across Copley Square, along Dartmouth Street to Beacon Street, every house was brightened by the greens at the windows. Uncle John said to me, with a little dry sound in his voice: "This day always brings up my mother to me, Margaret. Father never permitted much Christmas at our house, — I wish you could have seen the old place, opposite to where the theatre is now, — but she always had a pair of new stockings for us boys on Christmas morning, and in the toe was some little gift, something each boy wanted particularly. Why, Margaret, I remember Boston when there was no Back Bay. I remember seeing herds of sheep and cattle driven along Washington Street, then a strip of road leading from Boston to Dorcester. I'm getting to be an old man, Margaret, but it has made me young

to have your bright face and natural ways in the house."

I merely put my arm in his for a moment and made him tell more about the Boston of his youth. Uncle John was a lonely man. The members of his family were too much engrossed with outside matters to waste time in making him happy.

Dinner took the better part of Christmas afternoon. Dorothy's one little boy was nearly a moral and physical wreck by night, being the only representative of childhood among us.

Dorothy made an opportunity to say to me, "I asked Fred about that photograph again, Madgie, and told him what you said. He is indignant, and says he will speak to Warren about it, if you will allow him to."

"No," I replied, shaking my head, "I want no words between them over me. Thank Fred for me and tell him I intend to find out the truth, and punish Mr. Hartwell myself, if necessary."

"Better let Fred do it," she insisted; but I was firm.

All that Christmas Day I treated Mr. Hartwell with calm indifference, until finally he walked off with a slight shrug and scarcely noticed me again.

Elizabeth had a strange way of colouring whenever he approached her. She was never familiar with any one nor enthusiastic in her friendships. She was impenetrable where her affections were concerned.

During the holidays I scarcely breathed between engagements. The marvel of it all is the longevity of the Boston women. They work harder in and out of society than they could endure to work at bread-winning. My nature is too open for me even to pose as a flirt, but I had a plan laid for penetrating the depths of Mr. Warren Hartwell, and it required the aid of several other men. After Christmas Day I resumed my ordinary manner toward him.

He asked me one night after a theatre party if he had done anything to offend me. I replied, "Is that your conscience speaking?"

"Oh, no! It is the conscience of my ancestors."

"Is it probable that you would do anything to offend me that I could only know about second-hand?" I asked.

Speaking with his usual lazy indifference, he replied:

"No, I love you too well for that."

I stared at him one moment, then exclaimed, angrily:

"I did not think even Boston manners could be so execrable!" and left him standing alone.

CHAPTER IV

NOT until late in January did an opportunity arise for the experience at the Lesters' which Dorothy had promised me.

I had come to the conclusion, owing to the frequent disillusion I had met with, that heroes of the artistic world were best viewed at a distance personally if one wished to preserve a shred of the worshiping faculty. As a rule, the artistic nature gives out its best possessions through the medium of its creations or interpretations, reserving a disenchanting personality for social relations. Having taken keen delight in Mr. Lester's books, I had no special desire to know the other side of him; but for the sake of another view of Boston, I went to his house, only to find him one of the welcome exceptions. Perhaps he is not sufficiently great to afford a disagreeable

manner; at any rate, he presented a genial, well-bred exterior, devoid of egotistical mannerisms. Talented people are like Boston men, — so used to seeing themselves in admiring eyes that a wholesomely truthful reflection either elicits their surprised admiration, or brings out the disagreeable qualities of any spoiled child. To this day, whenever I mount Beacon Hill, a mysterious feeling of expectancy comes over me. I peer around for a fleeting glance of Priscillas, John Aldens, or other far-away people who rightfully belong among those quaint old houses still breathing out history and romance.

Beacon Hill is the only quiet part of Boston; removed from the disturbance of steam engines, electric cars, and general traffic, — in fact, it is the only sequestered portion in the centre of any large city that I have found on this side of the Atlantic. At night only occasional electric lights dazzle the inhabitants of the air, but gaslight, in old-fashioned lamps, one here and there, attached to the angles or sides of a house, flickers about among

the old-fashioned shadows. The ancient city residence of the Adams family, now passed into other hands, stands behind its one tree as if hiding natural grief at the unfaith of the family which bred its traditions.

The ballroom of spacious dimensions, built for a Miss Adams upon the occasion of her first appearance in the social world, has been renovated; but no modern taste can do away with the atmosphere of the dignified past still permeating that desolate room, draughty with the breath of former days, — a draught too subtle and spirited to be warmed away by modern furnaces. This town house of the Adams family represents Mount Vernon Street, and the one block of Beacon Street on the hill where certain families honourably continue their ancestral line, though hemmed in disagreeably by tailor shops and a club house.

In front of these old places moves the hum of human masses hurrying to and fro, backward and forward in step with time, through the Common, with its circuitous walks shaded by noble trees of illustrious

ancestry, its Frog Pond and soldiers' monument, all echoes of more humanly picturesque days. Behind Mount Vernon and Chestnut Streets, whose occupants are sometimes of the true blue and oftener of assorted blood, though choosing always conventional, stereotyped modes of living, comes the section reputed to be Bohemia. There, on Pinckney Street above Charles and along Joy Street, one begins to see life. The majority of the old homes on Pinckney Street are converted into lodging-houses, although a few professional families still occupy an entire house apiece. There are to be found rooming spinsters of *Mayflower* descent, generally poor connections of the same families residing on Beacon Street not far away, — near enough to mention frequently and intimately; musicians; newspaper people; painters; incipient authors and a few full-fledged; professors of many languages; teachers; composers; impecunious youths with high spirits and one "dress suit" among several; female typewriters and private secretaries. Here is the freedom of the Latin Quarter, with but a small

amount of its license. Human nature bears a close family resemblance all over the world when judged by communities with similar earmarks, but in America individuals merely pose as Bohemians; they seldom come up (or down) to the "Simon pure" article of foreign cities. America is eminently a respectable country, well-washed morally, and with considerable respect for the neighbours' opinion. Americans become Bohemianised in Paris, but seldom in Boston, where the spook of Cotton Mather and other standards of respectability still hold sway with a groan and a ghostly shudder at a mishap. In truth, this Boston Bohemia stands for good spirits and innocent unconventionality, and is several times more virtuous than Boston society, no matter how pretentiously and flamboyantly the little country tries to disprove its virtue.

There can be no general license in a neighbourhood dotted with boarding-houses where one must pass an examination both in respectability and brains before admittance is allowed, and which are conducted

by patterns of spinsterial virtue who sit at the head of a table full of cultured boarders, announcing the cultured menu to each individual somewhat in this wise: "Miss ——, will you partake of lamb warmed in its own gravy? Or a suggestion of shepherd's pie? Or possibly chicken pie to come?"

Beyond this hint at freedom the negroes begin to live and hold their own in a solid mass to the very foot of the hill. This is fashionable Africa, where the quality is high and the negro inhabitant would be a foreigner to the members of his race in most cities. But to the north and east of the hill, surrounding the rear of the State House, there is a life carried on under the rose, in the silence of conscious guilt, which, whether it be found in the Latin Quarter of Paris, in Bloomsbury, London, or on the shady side of Beacon Hill, is the rotten core of society. This life is one of the various weeds called license, grown in the garden of freedom and not reached by the hand of the law.

Below Charles Street, bearing upon the

river at the western foot of the streets reviewed above, there is another exclusive quarter. There one finds the Church of the Advent, from which run off whimsical little streets laid out in half-circles or obtuse angles, and living amidst some strictly Sabbatarian and conventional families, the "quality of the artistic life," who divide their time between the callings of society and those of their professions. There one hears an echo of Paris, too; many French phrases intersperse conversation, imitation salons are held on Sunday night and other nights. Without doubt that tiny section covers more of the real wit, wisdom, and worldliness than any one other part of Boston. On one of these streets Dorothy took me to an evening at the Lesters'. A man at one time was known by the books he read and the friends he made, but at present in judging his tendencies one must also consider the interior of his home, no matter if that home be contained in one room. The interior of the Lesters' house was very eloquent upon this theme. The hangings,

furniture, pictures, cosy corners, and decorative objects of interest were all in accord with an æsthetic nature moulded by intimacy with the world. The guests, with few exceptions, were of the American type never mentioned abroad; people who are accustomed from birth to social usages, including the use of forks for pie and beans — and apropos of beans let me interrupt myself long enough to say that no one can judge of baked beans outside of Boston. Just as the Scotchman loses his most interesting characteristics removed from his "ain fireside," so beans lose all family resemblance and flavour baked outside of Massachusetts.

There is an unutterable succulence about a Boston bean, and a toothsome sweetness which, once wholly appreciated under proper conditions, can never be lost to the memory of the palate.

But, to return, Elizabeth, who was with us that night, soon became absorbed in a discussion with the same tired-eyed composer whom I have mentioned before, concerning the ethics of the Wagnerian

theory of art. My charming hostess presented to Dorothy and me a celebrated Frenchman who was lecturing upon French literature at Harvard. He seemed immensely attracted toward Dorothy, to whom he said with an air of flippant intensity, so to speak: "A manifold pleasure to meet in such charming society the ideal American, Mrs. Granger! It is my hope that she has not failed to remember the occasion upon which we met last —" then he turned into French, which Dorothy chattered glibly, and Elizabeth included me in her conversation with the composer.

"Perhaps my cousin, who has lived in Paris, can help us to decide," she said. "Margaret, I contend that the Wagnerian principles of Art are too fraught with metaphysical significance ever to take hold upon the Latin mind. Mr. Tomlins does not agree with me. What do you think?" She looked at me with the Boston face; he glanced at both of us as if bored with any opinion opposing his own. I replied, "True art is not racial. The Latin races discriminate between the true and the

spurious in Wagner's work, whereas the Germans idolise him without discrimination." I used all of those big words bravely, — the punishment must be made to fit the crime. Elizabeth was impressed and the composer ceased to be bored for a minute. He took up the discussion almost as if I were his equal mentally; but to my relief Mr. John Bradley came up just then. "Again I find you a victim," he said. "All I am good for in Boston is to act as a sandwich between wit and wisdom. There is a man looking for you. Have you seen him yet? Hartwell. He told me to hunt you up."

"You are indeed a social martyr, Mr. Bradley," I replied. "If Mr. Hartwell feels the need of my society he can find me without putting his friends on the warpath."

"Oh, don't call it that, or I shall feel called upon to assume the arduous duties of an arbitration committee. Hartwell's a lazy duck. Then, too, he knew I'd enjoy the mission. He only asked me if you were here. There's something great

out about Hartwell. Have you heard it? The fellows were telling me the other night at the Pewter Mug Club. He's completely 'bowled over' by some strange woman's picture he carries around with him, begging the fellows to locate the original. Picked up the photograph on the street or some place. You know Hartwell's such a close-mouther that everybody is full of this 'corker' on him. I've put the story down for future reference. It will 'go' as 'copy.'"

My heart seemed to plunge downward, it stood so still. I felt pale, but managed to reply, "Is that the way the people talk in your books, Mr. Bradley, or is Rudyard Kipling phraseology coming into vogue?"

"I beg pardon, Miss Allston. A man catches slang like the measles. Thanks for tripping up my vocabulary. Now, if I could only imitate the language of my Hibernian laundress, my ships would sail over the mountain. She lives in Meander Lane, and confides in me; two facts telling against her. 'My Lard, sour! Pwhat 'm I to be doin', sour? Me bye, Jimmy,

he wor took to the ashpital, sour, — the ashpital, — and beloiks thim lazy thramps o' doctors il kilt him sure, — they're sure to. Is the place afther bein' named ashpital for phwat they turns 'em into ashes, sour? Dust to dust — ashes to ashes — I've heard it the marnin' afther the wake, sour.' She was in tears, I was in — "

A man and woman approached as he talked. At that moment the man interrupted him by laying a heavy hand on his shoulder, saying loudly, "Bradley, my boy, glad to see you! Decided to come back to the land of the bourgeois after all, did you?" Mr. Bradley, looking surprised and bored, I fancied, shook hands with both of them in his airy way, while the woman broke into a peculiar laugh which seemed to be an affliction of hers, remarking in the midst of it, "We are glad to find a sympathetic soul on this side, Mr. Bradley (fearful laugh); Mr. Travers and I could hardly tear ourselves away from Italy (whoop). America is so bourgeois, *so tame*, so PLEBEIAN! (giggle). Have you begun to feel at home yet? We come

back with some noisy Americans. So tiresome!"

He made some reply I did not hear because Elizabeth, deserted by the composer, who left her standing alone, had turned to me. Mr. Bradley presented to us, from sheer compulsion, Mr. and Mrs. Travers. Elizabeth put up her lorgnette with a look I understood. "Everybody knows the Allstons," said Mr. Travers. "I guess we came across some of your relations in Paris. Nice people for Americans. My wife and I about made up our minds never to come back to this bourgeois country last summer. A man can't be a gentleman in America. Why, them fellows in London don't go to business till ten o'clock, and close at four. You'd ought to go to Paris, you two, if you want some fun. Paris is the only place to live in."

He continued in the same strain for possibly ten minutes, reiterating that "we'd ought to go to Paris," without stopping to find out whether or not we had ever gone. Meantime that coarse

laugh would sound at disagreeable intervals close by, until I saw Elizabeth, with a sudden "excuse me," walk off and leave me with the untamed American, who could see no good in his own country. I was too full of amused utterance to speak. Mr. Bradley would twinkle his gay eyes at me every time the laugh sounded, and the man kept on telling me, "I'd ought to go to Paris," until some other people coming up, Mr. Bradley turned the couple over to the newcomers. "Been to Paris?" the author asked as he turned to me. "You'd ought to go to Paris! Take them with you, if you go, and leave them there. I wonder how they ever got into this house. I never met them anywhere else in town. There's Hartwell! I wonder if the maiden's picture reposes in his left breast pocket. Let's go and ask him." I objected, and he remained chatting with me, while covertly, out of the corner of my eye, I noticed Mr. Hartwell watching us.

Directly Dorothy brought up a very interesting gentleman, a musical critic with a keen wit and ready tongue smacking

unconsciously of continental life. He interested me so completely that I regretted the interruption of a talkative girl, who approached us exclaiming, "Now, my dear Mr. Wendel, you are not to escape me again to-day! I did everything but whistle to attract your attention at the *dear* recital this afternoon. Wasn't it dear? When you 'do' the Kneisel Quartette to-morrow night I wish you would mention each man separately, they are all such dears. What I want is to know if you will give the private theatricals one of your stunning advance notices in your paper. That paper is such an old dear, you must like to write for it. Oh! Miss Allston, Elizabeth's cousin. Pardon! How-de-you-do? I did not see you. They tell me you are awfully good at that sort of thing — theatricals, I mean — been trained in Paris, and all that. Aren't you going in for them, too? — just to help us out? You mustn't think we only go in for culture in Boston. They bore me so when I visit New York by expecting me to talk wisdom, — something I never do."

I excused myself from them after a few moments. As I moved away the clergyman of Uncle John's church accosted me. He began at once to talk about the theatricals the girl had mentioned. They were to be for some charitable purpose in which he was interested. From that subject he branched off into a story of one of his parishioners, a lady, who had bemoaned for years her inability to assist him as much as she desired with money in charitable work. Finally a fortune fell to her lot and she ceased giving altogether. He asked her why she had failed him in her plenty. "Yes," she replied, "the Lord has bestowed upon me more money, but at the same time he has taken away my disposition to give. How do you account for that?" Some very good music, as is the rule at the Lesters', interrupted his reply, so I never heard how he answered that poser. After the music I realised that the house was full of lions and lionesses all roaring at once. In the company of lions one must be very long-eared to venture upon an individual bray. With short ears one

knows enough to listen and bow down. However, a painter with a noble brow, deep, serious eyes, and long, curling black hair talked to me about everything else but his work and himself. I knew, when I realised his identity, that he left the talking for other people to do. Another painter with more manner than genius, and possessed of a fluent tongue which dealt out persiflage faster than I could think, did not leave himself out of the conversation entirely. The woman who writes the most popular magazine stories of the day was there: a quiet, unassuming person with a saintly smile. There were poets long and short haired, book reviewers, and several newspaper editors. Mrs. Bobby Short sailed in late (she always seems like a graceful ship in full sail with several tugs steaming in her wake), with one of the first violins of the Symphony Orchestra, an English actor, and a young man whose identity was evidently unknown. The particular lioness was an opera singer from the Metropolitan Opera House Company in New York, who was to

be the soloist at the Symphony concert that week. This singer, Mrs. Short and her wake, and some of Dorothy's friends had been dining together at Mrs. Short's and came in with quite a breeze, very full of each other and their recent dinner. After several attempts I escaped to a secluded cosy corner behind the piano, where I gratefully sat alone for a few moments, taking breath while criticising Boston in ambush. But I had only a moment alone in which to enjoy this intermission, for presently I saw Warren Hartwell, who had been talking to the prima donna, look vacantly around the room; then, upon catching sight of me, he followed to my retreat.

I saw him coming and wished for a hole in the wall behind me. Between us, as he advanced, there passed a plain-looking couple of middle age from whom one would have expected Latin verse at least. I shall always remember how that woman looked coyly at the man, saying with an air, "I'm afraid you're a butterfly!"

Mr. Hartwell was coming nearer. He had written me a note, which I left un-

answered. To his salutation I barely replied, letting my hand drop to my side. His face was wide awake that night.

"Miss Allston," he began, bending over me as I sat there, "I wrote you a note two weeks ago. The next day I was called to New York, where I have been ever since until to-day. I left orders to forward my letters. No reply came from you. Did you receive my note?"

"Yes," I replied, looking past him.

"As I said, a man untrained at the pen cannot put on paper the thoughts he holds highest. I told you that I loved you, which seemed to make you angry. I wished to say more. You deserted me. I wrote, asking for an interview when I could say the rest. You have not answered my note. Am I to understand —"

"You are to understand," I replied, looking directly up at him, "that outside of Boston, men do not love women they do not respect; and, not being a Bostonian, I have nothing to reply to your letter."

"HE TOOK US TO OUR CARRIAGE."

"What do you mean? Have I done or said anything disrespectful? Oh, Margaret, do not —"

"Hush," I cautioned. "Here comes Elizabeth. We are going. I have nothing to say to you, Mr. Hartwell, except that if you have a photograph of me I should like to have it returned at once."

"How did you know —?" he attempted to say, but Elizabeth reached us and he took us to our carriage almost in silence. As he closed the carriage door he said, "Ah, by the way, Miss Allston, may I drive you out on the boulevard to-morrow afternoon? The ground is just right for sleighing even in town. In the country it will be better."

"Thanks, no," I replied; "you are very kind, but I have an engagement." He closed the door quickly with a sudden good night.

"What is the matter with Warren?" asked Dorothy. "Is he in a temper?"

"I don't know," I replied. "I thought a Boston man was too indifferent ever to lose his temper." Dorothy laughed. "The

idea! I believe you like Boston men better than you pretend to, Madgie."

"I certainly would not tell them so if I did. They are conceited enough already."

"They certainly are all of that," she admitted, with another laugh. Elizabeth said nothing. She leaned back against the cushions, looking very tired. About my cousin Elizabeth's face, there was always a touch of nobility. When her lorgnette was not in use she might have been called a severely handsome woman, but her emotional nature had become so entirely subordinated to her mental activity that, even at her age, there was scarcely a vestige of girlhood remaining in her face or manner. She was like her mother, in that all expression of feeling must be controlled first and last. One must renew one's acquaintance with a typical Bostonian at every fresh encounter. For fear of undue intimacy the Puritan nature repels even those toward whom it is attracted. A Bostonian will go out of his way to do you a favour, and at the same time affirm that he has done nothing to oblige you,

KING'S CHAPEL.

until one feels his act to be a condescension, — an impression he had no desire to convey. This is also a characteristic of the Britisher, of whom the Bostonian is the closest descendant characteristically in the United States. So it was with Aunt Drusilla. She was a thoroughly good woman; the trouble lay in her exact knowledge of how good she was and how good other people ought to be.

The day following the evening at the Lesters' I went with her to attend a special meeting of the woman suffragists at King's Chapel. My aunt, though not an active public worker in the emancipation cause, was a great enthusiast in that movement, never missing a meeting where her best friends were always to be seen. As we drove down-town she said, in a tone of reprimand, "Margaret, the girls tell me you have had some quarrel or trouble with Warren Hartwell. The mere thought of such a possibility is displeasing to me. When I was a girl, girls were too well bred to quarrel with young men, but nowadays girls are forward, acting as though there

were no line drawn between the sexes. Warren has been on intimate terms with our family from his birth, as were his people before him. I should regret any strained relations brought about by our niece." Had she been my mother or my mother's sister I should at once have opened my heart to her, but no one could confide in Aunt Drusilla with any sense of relief. Instead, I avoided the question by saying, rather wickedly, I admit, "Did it ever occur to you, Aunt Drusilla, that the fence between the sexes, which you speak of having existed in your girlhood, is being taken down by these very women we are going to hear talk this afternoon?"

"No, nothing so untrue or unreasonable could occur to me," she replied, indignantly,— forgetting Mr. Hartwell. "These women are the nobility of the land; they are the pioneers, directed by a ruling hand to clear the world of wrongs, to free their sister slaves of the spirit oppressed for centuries by selfish man."

"They may be all that," I replied, "and still be responsible for the new independ-

ence common to the younger generation of women. They have given a push to liberty of thought which is invariably followed by liberty of action. *I* do not condemn them for what they have done; I honour them, but I only suggested that you are inconsistent in blaming the girls for being what their mothers are making them. Let them vote by all means, I say, then take the consequences."

"You show your ignorance by laying at our door any advocacy of liberty between sexes," she replied. "Our war-cry is 'the individual right:' give every woman her individual rights as a human being; give her elevation of mind; throw light upon her intelligence and she will raise the standards of the world and pull men up after her."

"But, my dear aunt, the freedom of the single individual means the freedom of all individuals. The woman does not live her life isolated with her freedom from the rest of the world. Freedom is a condition existing between individuals. If she lived alone she would of necessity be

free because there would be no one to interfere with her actions."

"You are entirely mistaken; your premises are all wrong. Political rights are distinct and apart from the right to burn your neighbour's house down if you are so inclined. I fear, Margaret, you have imbibed anarchistic views in Paris or among the kind of Bostonians you meet at Miss Thurlston's."

The distinctive feature of a woman's argument is the feminine knowledge of how to tack. If the wind blows too hard from one quarter she veers, then asserts that she was stronger than the wind. Aunt Drusilla had the art of tacking to perfection. I dropped the subject. As we went into King's Chapel she said, firmly, "I hope you understand, Margaret, that what I said about Warren Hartwell amounts to a request from your hostess and aunt."

"Certainly I understand, Aunt Drusilla," and to myself I echoed, "Warren Hartwell is the best-connected young man in Boston."

OLD GRANARY BURYING-GROUND.

When of a Sunday afternoon I had gone to King's Chapel to vesper services, the quaint church with its high-backed box-pews cushioned in red stuff, its old-English gallery, and high pulpit reached by winding stairs, gave me a sense of peace and spiritual rest. Although the church doctrines are now Unitarian, the form of worship is almost identical with the old ritual used before the Trinitarian belief was exchanged for the newer faith. The combination lends a humanitarian spirit to the form of worship and to the wise, simple words of the good man who preaches there. I have sat in my high-backed pew overlooking the ancient burying-ground and wondered what the human relics lying beneath those headstones would think of the violin solo floating out upon the quiet air from the choir-loft above my head, could their senses quicken again for a moment.

Those dead were probably not imbued with the Calvinistic spirit of their doctrinal opponents lying now in the Old Granary burying-ground of the Park Street Church across the street a block away; but still I

think they would be surprised at the advance of ideas they must meet with if they ever look in at those windows. How would one of the grand dames lying out there take the meeting we attended that day? I fancy she would shudder at some of the opinions advanced, provided she understood them in the least. But there was nothing at which a modern mind could shudder in the expressions of those women. First of all, they were sincere,— an element in their work or any one's work which cannot be too highly valued. Not among that entire assemblage did I note a face spotted with the stains of the flesh. They were distinctly high, if frequently narrow-minded, women. Even if, as some do hold, the emancipationists are mistaken in their cause, their enthusiasm must either be ennobling or a high class of women comprehend the suffrage idea. They were mostly middle-aged or elderly women of unworldly appearance as to dress; in fact, one could label the assembly as a meeting of cultivated, conscientious, corsetless women. Without exception they spoke ably and authoritatively, even when ingenuity

was required to disguise their arguments as flimsy and unstable.

The most convincing argument I ever heard upon the question of women's political rights was made by a man, and it was convincing because, instead of dwelling upon the oppression and slavery to his sex, which the majority of women will not admit to be their position, he brought out the one argument, incapable of refutation, that if a woman of intelligence holds property she has at least as much right to say how it shall be disposed of by State or municipal law as has some ignorant foreigner with not a penny nor an inch of ground to his name. If the suffragists would dwell upon a few such practical, salient points they might arouse a widespread enthusiasm among women, without which their cause will never succeed. Aunt Drusilla could not induce even her own daughters to attend these meetings, and out of a dozen women I heard her invite for that particular occasion, I alone accepted her invitation; confessedly, out of curiosity.

I had never before seen Aunt Drusilla

unbend as she did at the close of the meeting, mingling among the sisters of the faith. Every one congratulated every one else, with the exclamation, "How interesting the meeting has been to-day! Unusually so, I think. The cause progresses; I hope I may live to see the day of our great success. It is bound to come!"

I left my aunt in this hopeful frame of mind and walked home for the sake of exercise. In my room I found awaiting me my long-lost photograph, with a note from Mr. Hartwell in which he said:

"My Dear Miss Allston: — Kindly permit me to return this photograph of you which I found last fall in a book in Bates Hall at the Public Library. If you condemn me for keeping it after I recognised the original, my only excuse is to be found in the hope I had of securing your ultimate permission to retain it among my choice possessions.

"This hope you have distinctly shown me to be futile, and I return the photograph with many apologies for not having done so earlier. I am leaving town to-day, so will bid you good-bye now, as you have given me to understand that my presence is obnoxious to you. I regret having

heightened your already poor opinion of my fellow citizens, because I had learned to value that opinion.

"Believe me most sincerely yours,

"WARREN HARTWELL."

Something unusual happened to me after reading that letter. I tore my photograph in two, threw it on the grate fire and cried over the letter. If he had waited until he was punished enough I should have tried to forgive him. Men are so obtuse, especially Boston men. Could he have left town without coming to the house at all? The family would never forgive me. How unfortunate!

CHAPTER V

THE month of February passed, duplicating with variations the gay and serious entertainments I have already described, but without a word from Warren Hartwell. He had called upon the family that afternoon while I was at the woman's suffrage meeting, but finding no one at home, he left his card for Aunt Drusilla, with the word "good-bye" written in one corner. No one in town seemed to know where he had gone, but you may be sure there were rumours of infinite variety.

One cold, blustering night in early March, after a day of winds which made one feel like a centripetal force drawing the blasts of the earth toward a common and unfortunate centre, we all sat around the library open fire, where the logs crackled spitefully at every new blast from across the river.

Uncle John sat by, reading the *Transcript.* Dorothy had been dining with us previous to attending a rehearsal of the private theatricals to be given after Easter and in which she was to take a minor part. Fred was in New York. Elizabeth, looking over at her sister, asked, "What is all this talk I hear about Warren? Does Fred know anything?"

"He has probably heard what you have. He knows nothing."

Elizabeth continued, "A woman came up to me this afternoon at the loan exhibition at the Grundmann studios and asked me if I knew the truth about Warren Hartwell. She went on to say that everybody said he had followed out West a vaudeville actress whose picture he carries around with him and shows everywhere, and she actually asked me if it were true."

"The idear!" broke in Aunt Drusilla. "How scandalous! How dare they say such a thing about a Hartwell! I hope you told her the truth, Elizabeth."

"I do not know the truth, mother. I told her I knew that Warren was above any

such liaison, but I have heard different versions of that picture story all winter."

Dorothy looked at me and my eyes fell.

"Don't believe one word they say, Elizabeth," Dorothy said, quickly. "Surely you don't believe everything you hear. Young men are always being talked about, and — "

"Stop, Dorothy," I said. "Give some better excuse than that for him or none at all."

They all looked at me, except Uncle John, who was immersed in his paper. "If you wish to know the truth about the photograph, I can give it to you," I continued, feeling like an army recruit in his first battle. "Mr. Hartwell has been carrying about and showing at the club a photograph of me, which he found in a library book where I left it."

"The idear!" exclaimed Aunt Drusilla. "John, do you hear that?"

"Yes, my dear," uncle responded, absently, reading on.

Then Dorothy and I between us went into details, telling what we thought we knew. I explained that Mr. Hartwell had

returned to me the object under discussion the day he left town. Elizabeth said, quietly, "I do not believe Warren showed your photograph at the club, Margaret. Warren has always been a gentleman."

Dorothy insisted that Fred had heard all about when and how he did it, but some way or another I could not corroborate her belief by my own evidence. I was forced into an explanation, but I could not bring myself to dye the villain blacker than he was already painted. In the midst of the discussion Uncle John dropped his paper and in an awed voice exclaimed, "Louise French is dead!"

"Dead!" the three women echoed.

"Yes, here is the notice: 'French.— At Aiken, March 5, Louise Hartwell French, wife of Samuel L. French. Funeral services to be held at her late residence, Marlborough Street, at 11 A. M., March 9.' Then here is a personal notice saying she died suddenly, attended by her husband and brother, who have been with her for some time past and who will accompany the remains home."

While my relatives, each in her different

way, expressed her grief for a lifelong friend, my mind dwelt upon that friend's brother. He had been at Aiken with his invalid sister while the town was ringing with gossip concerning his movements. Why could not the other reports be untrue, too? But if they were, how did Mr. Bradley know he possessed a photograph and the men at the club know it was my likeness, unless he had shown it? No; there was a clear case against him, and I felt my teeth close hard together even while I pitied him in his grief for his only sister.

The death of Mrs. French brought about a cessation of gaieties, including even the minor diversions of the Lenten season, not only among the members of our own household, but also among several families all of whom had been friends of the Hartwells personally or ancestrally since the Revolution at the latest. Bostonians have two particular occasions when they are demonstrative,— in case of death, or indefinite departure. This state lasted for a week or two, and was only broken by the grand opera season.

There is no one feature of Boston more astonishing, considering the claims the city lays to musical enlightenment, than the kind of building in which Bostonians, at that time, listened to grand opera during the few weeks of the year when the New York company visited Boston.

Opera was given in a mammoth barn called Mechanics' Building, built for food fairs, horse shows, and other like diversions. Its seating capacity is large, its hearing capacity infinitely small. At the back of the galleries the singers resembled puppets moving about in pantomime. Even the De Reszkes and Plançon, with their great volume of vocal tone, could scarcely be heard in many parts of the house. The seats are rudely made of wood, and are on a par as to comfort with the reserve at a circus. The draughts come and go at will, consequently the women hesitated to wear evening costumes. However, a sprinkling of such attire was always to be found amidst the otherwise plainly dressed audience. The victims amiably, year after year, paid fabulous prices for these disagreeable

places ; which fact of itself argues for their appreciation of opera as much as their absurd submission to conditions which could easily be remedied, argues against it. At last the prevailing rebellion against such operatic accommodations took form and were met by a transference of the annual week of opera to a large theatre, where the price of admittance was raised far beyond the limit of the average pocketbook.

Between acts we would wrap up in opera cloaks to avoid pneumonia, and promenade barren, black, dirty corridors for a bit of display under the name of sociability. Of course, everybody with connections was there, not to speak of the several thousand people besides, who in reality supported the enterprise by crowding to hear popular opera favourites, regardless of the merits of the opera or performance. Boston may move on a highly discriminating plane orchestrally ; she certainly does not operatically.

Dorothy's friends rivalled each other in entertaining the expensive vocalists,— at least, they entertained those who did not

decline all invitations, as was the case with the superlatively great artists Jean and Edward De Reszke and Calve, whose fame is built on a firmer rock than society favour. Frances Thurlston knew several of the singers well, personally; an acquaintance dating back some ten years in Paris. I enjoyed meeting them quietly at her apartment much more than at a crowded "afternoon," or even at a dinner. With Frances they were good comrades, not roaring lions; but with only a few exceptions, opera singers are more interesting on the stage than in a social capacity.

After several weeks Mr. Hartwell resumed his familiar visits at Uncle John's. My relatives had apparently forgotten the incident of the picture, or chose to ignore it out of respect for Warren's bereavement.

He was much changed. He talked but little to any one, scarcely at all to me. I avoided him as much as possible. The author, Mr. Bradley, was in close attendance upon me by that time. He said he had undertaken to teach me Bostonese. Although himself a Bostonian of impeccable

connections, he possessed the faculty of laughing at himself and of enjoying more than one kind of life. He insisted that Frances Thurlston furnished him more material than any one other person he had ever known. She almost liked him. They were like two men together. He was always making a note of her expressions. He conducted Frances and me all about the city, making himself invaluable to us by his actual knowledge and humourous style of narrative. It seems a pity he does not put more of himself into his books, and less of literary characters.

Easter came late that year, bringing a lull in the winds and many attractive symptoms of spring. One place of interest to which Mr. Bradley introduced us, merely as a glimpse of Boston at one point, not for any particular merit the exhibit displayed that year or any year, was the annual exhibition of pictures at the Art Club. Mr. Bradley insisted that his wit was only an editorial revision of the conversations he overheard at this exhibition. "Of course, you know," said he, "nobody but a few of the girl stu-

dents at the Art Museum come to look at the pictures."

"What do the rest come for?" I inquired, while Frances, who had left us sitting on one of the benches located in the middle of the room, walked up very close to a picture, looked at it keenly through squinted eyelids, then slowly stepped backward in approved fashion, gradually gaining a proper distance and in so doing upset a little man who was making funnels of his hands for the purpose of artistic focus. "They come to look at each other,— Bostonians are so picturesque, you know. Ten thousand blisters!" laughed Mr. Bradley. "She's upset Foller! He was focussing the vanishing-point! She broke into the middle ground! He'd forgive her for libel or theft, but never for that!"

"Who is the man?" I asked.

"Foller! Don't you know him? There's one of his prize things over there. Got three thousand for it several years ago. Hasn't made a penny since."

As we sat there I began to believe what he said was true. Most of the people

glanced cursorily at the pictures, and, after one quick tour about the rooms, relapsed into chatter. The art exhibition, at night, anyway, seemed to be but a social gathering decorated by the pictures on the walls. What else can be expected when so little of vital interest is exhibited? At the Art Museum one can see good pictures, also at the yearly loan exhibit, where there are collected the best to be found among the private possessions of the dilettante collectors; but an Art Club exhibition is, as a rule, far below the average as a whole, and there seems to be no satisfactory explanation of the fact.

In the Art Museum there are good pictures, casts, marbles, tapestries, laces, and many other beautiful objects sufficient to claim one's attention indefinitely; but having seen quantities of much the same thing before, I was more interested in watching the girl students of the school connected with the Museum pour out on to the streets, conspicuous in working blouses and great gingham aprons daubed liberally with impressionist colours, at the sound

BOSTON ART MUSEUM.

of a passing band. They chattered and munched candy or cakes from the confectioner's hard by, giggling and frisking about in true student ways; then like a flock of sheep they scurried back to work. And even more was I interested in the great number of Italians who congregate in this building of a Sunday afternoon, when there is no admission fee. Among the miscellaneous crowd collected there on Sunday these Italian women, some in gay garments, others in plain dark clothes, invariably brightened by a brilliant handkerchief or scarf about the neck or draped on the head, lend bright patches of colour to the throng. They seldom wear hats, even in cold weather. The men are less picturesque in attire, but are equally so in face and gesture. Mr. Bradley accounted for their choice of that particular place for Sunday rendezvous by their native taste for the best expression of art obtainable without cost. He took us over the North End, a part of which is now relegated to these Italians. The most picturesque of them make a

living by grinding orchestrions and rattling tambourines on the streets of new Boston. The dagos sell bananas and work as day labourers. Over there we investigated North Square, which is said to have more historical associations than any other spot in America. Until within a half-century it was a fashionable centre, but now the Paul Revere house is the most famous landmark within its precincts, carrying us back in thought to 1775. Near it stands the old Hichborn house, of much later date. The site of the first Old North Church, where the three Mathers preached, is adjacent. Sir Henry Frankland, who gained notoriety by marrying Agnes Surriage, a servant at a Marblehead inn, also resided on this square, next door to "Stingy Tommy" Hutchinson, who was governor as early as 1771. Along there Major Pitcairn had his headquarters during the Revolutionary War, not far from where the first public markets were located, adjacent to a watch-house, fire-engine station, and town pump.

When one can shut one's eyes to the

CHRIST CHURCH.

present condition of North Square, permitting these characters, with their significance, to file through one's brain, the North End is well worth visiting; but when one walks up Salem Street with a strong desire to sing aloud, "My name is Solomon Levi, I live on Salem Street," owing to the uninterrupted Semitic character of the shops and their contents, then comes upon Christ Church, in whose belfry Robert Newman, its sexton, hung the now celebrated signal-lights, standing in its original aspect except for that signal-light steeple long ago blown down and replaced by one of Bulfinch's design, the incongruity is historically bewildering and disturbing. The neighbourhood is inconsistent. One wishes American history were commemorated by fenced-off localities into which no foreign elements could penetrate and discolour.

Then we saw the narrowest street in Boston, which is saying as little as possible for its width. It is called Salutation, and is too narrow to admit of a sidewalk. The trite complaint of tourists that Boston

streets are bewildering in their turns and twists is a one-sided view of the city, a view confined to the old North End and the commercial portions of the newer city. The Back Bay and South End are stereotyped enough in regularity to suit any taste for parallel lines. Mr. Bradley related how his grandfather told him, as a child, about the life at the Red Lion, The King's Head, and Ship Tavern, and about travelling to Troy, New York, in a stage, — the longest trip the old gentleman had ever taken. "But the old boy thought he knew the world," said his grandson, who was, without doubt, as "well connected" as any Bostonian with whom I was acquainted, and the only one who spoke of his ancestry as if it did not amount to much. But he had lived most of his life in Europe. However, his intimate personal relation to the past brought those days close to us as we strayed with him about the North End. He insisted that only once was he concerned about his ancestry, and that was when he walked through the Common at the time the earth of the old burying-

ground there was being broken up for the purpose of running the subway underneath. "I believe I caught a chill at the tomb of some of my ancestors. As I stood talking to the men about some relics they had found, I suddenly remembered that this was the tomb of some of my maternal connections way back, and that chill came on," he said, without much evidence of the ague.

I do not remember any man whom I liked better than I did John Bradley. Everybody liked him. He said people always liked him too much to love him, especially women.

This must have been my case, because I wished several times I could love him. John Bradley had not a particle of the Boston man's pose. He never took himself too seriously. He looked at one when one was speaking quite as though he were gaining information or pleasure; generally the latter. Yes, John Bradley would be an interesting husband for some one.

On Easter Sunday I started out alone on foot, intending to call for Frances, as we had arranged to attend service to-

gether. The day was moist and warm. I welcomed spring with every breath. Along Beacon Street, in the tiny grass plots belonging to each house, the crocuses were nodding their heads in tune with the spring melodies in the air.

All about the bold equestrian statue of Washington at the Arlington Street entrance to the Public Gardens the hyacinths bloomed profusely, scenting the air deliciously. I made a little détour for the sake of the loveliness all about, walking slowly toward the bridged lake, where already the swan-boats had begun to ply for the benefit of the happy children. Alone, on a bench under a budding tree, sat a man whose back I recognised.

He faced the lake, and did not see me; but he looked so lonely, sitting there with his head slightly bowed, that even his top hat with its band of mourning and his immaculate frock coat could not stiffen the relaxed, forsaken look about him. I might easily have turned back, but my weak heart proved stronger than my will. I wore fastened to my jacket a bunch of lilies-of-the-

"I . . . DROPPED THE LILIES INTO ONE OF HIS HANDS."

valley. Unfastening them, I slowly walked past him and dropped the lilies into one of his hands, which lay open, palm up, on his knee. My honest intention was to pass on without a word, but the tone of his "Margaret!" held me. We looked at each other silently for a moment, then I smiled: whereupon rising and removing his hat, he asked, "Did you intend these for me or for some tramp upon whom you took pity?"

"I knew your back," I replied. "You looked so lonely —" I hesitated.

"Oh, it was pity, then, in any case?" he said. "Well, I am lonely, — there is no use to deny it."

Avoiding the subject, I said, "I had no idea a Bostonian with connections would do anything so plebeian as to sit in the Public Gardens on a bench."

"You seem to forget that Bostonians are human beings, after all; that they have hearts as well as connections, — hearts not easily stirred, but enduring in affection."

I tried to swallow my own heart at that moment: it leaped high; then, impetuously, I stepped nearer to him and held out my

hand. "Come and go to church with Miss Thurlston and me, won't you?"

"Do you mean it? Do you want me?"

"Yes; this is a day on which to forgive. I can't leave you sitting there alone."

"Well, I suppose pity is better than nothing," he said, moving along by my side. "I will go. I cannot yet admit that I ever committed any great breach of etiquette toward you; but you seem to think I did, so even momentary forgiveness is a good deal, coming from you."

"Don't let us talk about it any more, Mr. Hartwell," I said. "Smell the flowers, listen to the chimes, and thank God for all we have and are. When I think of my own mistakes I can afford to forgive for at least one day, when it is a day like this."

"Could you forgive that man who let you tie your own shoe string on his step?" inquired he, with the gayest look I had seen on his face since Christmas.

"Yes, even that man, provided he would do penance by tying it now," I replied, without any particular thought.

"Permit me," he replied, and before I

STATUE OF WASHINGTON AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE PUBLIC GARDEN.

knew what he was doing, down he went on one knee on the grass beside the bench and was tying my shoe-string, which was dragging. A well-connected Bostonian on one knee, Easter morning, in the Public Gardens! "What if some one should see us?" I gasped.

"Why should you care?" he replied, giving the bows an extra pull before he stood up. "You are not a Bostonian."

"Well, do you mean to say you are the man who laughed at me that day in the rain?"

"What else could a man do? That was my sister's house. The day I landed I was taken with the most ridiculous disease a grown man could have, — measles. I caught them from my sister's children. I was shut up for several weeks at her house; you know I crossed earlier than I intended. That rainy day I was getting fierce with boredom. While roaming about the house I chanced into the drawing-room and looked out to examine the weather. I arrived on the scene just in time to see a woman trying to tie her boot lace. You looked as

though you were swearing. Were you? Then you glanced up at me, and what disdain your face took on! With that one blast of scorn you turned away and stumbled on, believing, I suppose, that I had been a witness of the entire performance. Did I laugh? How could a man help it? I never forgot your face, anyway."

"And you did not tell me in all these months!" I asked, laughing in spite of myself at the remembrance.

"That is the way Bostonians leave an impression of great knowledge. They tell enough and intimate the rest, as I have done, thus working on the imagination of the listener with great effect. Don't you think? Then, too, when a woman has a poor opinion of a man to begin on, he is not likely to tell the worst until he finds the case hopeless. I —"

"Here, turn to the right, up Boylston Street," I interrupted. "Have you forgotten the way?"

"No, but a glimpse of happiness sometimes obscures a man's vision. Where did you say we were going?"

"To join Miss Thurlston, then to church."

"And pick up Bradley on the way?" he asked, with affected indifference.

"Mr. Bradley is out of town," I said, looking away from him.

"I am glad to hear that. Do you know, Miss Allston, I started through the Garden this morning in rather a desperate mood. The taste of spring in the air, as I breathed it, enticed me into sitting down among the flowers. I was thinking, when you came up, what a poor use of the world's beauty we make — at least, those of us who live cooped up amidst brick and mortar. Ordinary men in cities become so dependent upon human beings and human thought that when trouble comes they do not know how to turn to the wonderful expressions of God which speak to the poet or to any artistic temperament."

I listened to Mr. Hartwell with deep respect, because I knew how difficult it must be for a man of his reserved nature to put such thoughts into words. I knew he was addressing one whom he held dear to

himself, otherwise he would have thought without speaking.

"Yes," I said, gently. "We of the artistic temperament have many joys and many sorrows other people do not know."

"Take a chap like Bradley," he went on. "He is always expressing himself, finding form for everything he feels; but sometimes I wonder if such men feel as deeply as I, who am pent up."

"No, I do not believe they do feel like your kind; or perhaps their feeling is as deep, but it is not lasting. Their power of expression relieves them and makes room for newer feelings. I would trust your kind for strength and endurance more than I would the other."

"Is that honest?" he asked, looking down at me with the eyes of a man not used to being conquered,— with an unwilling delight there.

"Yes," I replied, hurriedly; "but here we are at Miss Thurlston's."

"Wait a moment. Could I do anything to make you forget my mistake about the picture?"

"Nothing but disprove the facts."

His face lengthened, and we walked up the steps of the apartment house together without speaking. After church Mr. Hartwell went home with me to Easter dinner, being engaged previously as a guest at that feast; but he relapsed into a spiritless manner toward me, and after that day I rarely saw him. He was not going out socially, and after that Easter Day talk he came seldom to our house. Always once a week flowers were sent me without a card. Although my instinct assured me of the source of this weekly offering, I could not refuse to enjoy the flowers nor to be secretly glad of the remembrance.

We were once more deep in social labours. I am nearly certain that Elizabeth attended, on an average, four chamber concerts and recitals weekly, besides the Symphony Rehearsal. Even my absorbing interest in music could not urge me to such immoderate attendance. What one values one must not exhaust. Elizabeth was conscientious in her pleasure as well as in her industry. She laboured at piano practice long after the

spirit which achieved was fagged, and urged by the same Puritan rod she religiously attended concerts for fear she might fail in her duty toward the art she held the highest. Musical fanaticism is not so prevalent in Boston as in Germany, but there are indications of individual tendency that way.

Dorothy took me to the only club meeting I was ever known to enjoy, and the reason for this result lay in the fact that the Playgoers was a club only in name and membership, while in fact its meetings were receptions at which local celebrities and others convened for the purpose of lionising some distinguished actor, author, or singer.

Frances Thurlston was there that afternoon, accompanied by John Bradley's sister and her latest "freak," of whom she plainly was getting a surfeit. This Professor Langdon Frances called her peripatetic poet.

There was no certainty as to which branch of knowledge he professed particularly; certainly there were few in which he had not lingered more ambitiously than famously. He had lectured, preached,

taught school, and scribbled over the major part of the United States, judging from his frequent and unreserved personal revelations. If there was a single celebrity he had not known intimately, we had never heard of him or her, and his memory for other people's thoughts and sayings was marvellous and tiresome.

We are all plagiarists, as for that; but some of us prefer our own feeble turn of expression to unending quotation of more heroic forms. Professor Langdon was verging on to fifty. His figure was the best thing about him, and would have been better clothed in garments large enough to fit. His inevitable frock coat separated widely at the usual meeting of the tails in the back, and even wider across the chest. We wondered many times if a hat of the right size would have been more expensive than one many times too small for his long auburn curls. Between valuable quotations, of which his conversation was composed, he would pause for an ecstatic moment, shut his eyes, and raise his face heavenward for inspiration. There were many indications

pointing to our belief that he subsisted entirely on onions. Mr. Bradley called him Saint Bermuda, insisting that Frances was fated to cultivate the fruits of his knowledge indefinitely, possibly maritally.

If ever Frances hated one man more than most men, the unfortunate was Saint Bermuda, and the more she hated the more he reverenced her. He told us once he honoured strength, even when it was directed against himself. John Bradley merely looked at us, articulating with his lips "Bermudas?" That afternoon he had joined Frances and Miss Bradley on the street and, with his usual genial intimacy, attached himself to their party. Accordingly, the first people we saw at the Play-goers were the Professor in an interval of silent, closed-eyed ecstasy while talking to Miss Bradley, and John Bradley, condoling humourously near by with Frances, who looked fierce. Needless to say the Professor attracted much attention. He seemed to know nearly everybody in the room, and in a few moments had got himself presented to the lion of the occasion,

who, being a foreigner, wrote afterward, in the first chapter of his impressions of America, that Bostonians wore clothes too small for them, ate onions, and quoted poetry to excess; which passage plainly evinced that Saint Bermuda's was the strongest personality he met in Boston. I never saw a Mormon preacher, but Professor Langdon always reminded me of one.

From the Playgoers I left Dorothy and went with Frances and her party to an Italian restaurant for dinner. When Bostonians break out with a desire for flesh-pots, they hie them to an Italian restaurant as the straightest course to Egypt; whereas, a newborn babe is hardly more virtuous than one of those eating-houses, where bad manners and bad tobacco are the only indications of bad morals to be seen.

Professor Langdon insisted that after dinner we must accompany him to one of the most interesting and cultured meetings ever held in Boston, where we would have a chance to talk with earnest, spiritual-minded people at their club called by some Greek name, meaning the doorway or arch-

way, if I recall it correctly. Mr. Bradley added his persuasions so gravely and persistently that I viewed him with suspicion. I knew he scented "copy" or "larks," the two objects of his existence. And so we went to the club with the Greek name; a party, as Mr. Bradley confided to me, composed of several "freaks" and himself,—representative Bostonians.

CHAPTER VI

SAINT BERMUDA'S promised gathering of exalted spirits surpassed even his own personality in unique entertainment. Many of Frances Thurlston's coterie were present, but the predominating element was representative of the Cambridge Conferences and the Theosophical cult. At one side of the room stood a young man whom at first I mistook for a mulatto. He was surrounded by women, upon whom he cast rather weary glances out of large, innocent, bovine eyes. He spoke seldom; whether from lack of words or opportunity, one could not say at a glance.

"You have not met Swami!" exclaimed Saint Bermuda. "His is a grand soul. He is teaching us, in the words of my friend, Hamilton Mabie, that 'Culture's

distinctive characteristic is not extent, but quality of knowledge; not range, but vitality of knowledge; not scope of activity, but depth of life.' Swami is a grand soul!"

"But who is Swami? And why do the women swarm so?" I persisted.

"Boston bees about a Hindoo flower, sucking spiritual honey," interposed Bradley.

"A Hindoo priest, you mean?"

"Exactly; or idol, I should say, to look at the worshiping women," he replied, with serious disdain.

"How can they act so over any man?" sniffed Frances.

"Ah! he is a grand soul, Miss Thurlston," replied Saint Bermuda. "Are you not inspired in his presence, as his followers are, in the words of our great poet, Lowell, to

> "'Be noble! and the nobleness that lies
> In other men, sleeping, but never dead,
> Will rise in majesty to meet thine own'?"

"I can't say that I am," replied Frances, with scorn. "He looks as bored as the

baby lion at the Zoo used to when the women patted him and tried to kiss him."

"That is but Swami's bodily fatigue," exclaimed a feminine Theosophist standing with us. "His eternal ego, his spiritual essence, grasps and holds the higher life ever before our more backward being. Nirvana stands as a mountain-top before his gaze. His spirit rises slowly toward that eminence under transitory forms and —"

"As my friend John Fiske says," interrupted Saint Bermuda, "when God revealed himself to his ancient prophet he came not in the earthquake nor the tempest, but in a voice that was still and small; so that divine spark, the soul, as it takes up its abode in this realm of fleeting phenomena, chooses —"

"Oh, Professor Langdon," broke in a voice I seemed to have heard before, "we have not seen you at our 'evenings' this winter! Are you deserting us, or is literary work taking all your time?"

A laugh followed, asserting the identity of the speaker. I had met her at the

Lesters'. Turning to Mr. Bradley, she went on, "So glad to have a chance to tell you how much I enjoyed your new book. Having heard so much talk and criticism about it, I was surprised to find it so good. Americans have such poor taste in literature. I like everything you write."

"You are very good," murmured John Bradley, trying to hide the joke he saw on himself. We escaped, and crossed the room to meet Swami. I found him an intelligent Hindoo, who spoke good, though limited, English. He confessed that it surprised him to find such an earnest following of his own religion as came under his observation in a Christian community like Boston.

Presently there was some very bad vocal music made by a corpulent lady wearing a dress altogether too short in the skirt for grace, and too tight in the waist to admit of a proper exhibition of her method of breathing, — the feature of vocal life in Boston which really supplants the importance of singing. Judging from the conversation of singing pupils in Boston, one

can easily fancy that song is produced by some mechanical contortions carried on below the waist, regardless of beauty or health. This singer was a method contortionist. People who dwell altogether in either their souls or brains have poor taste in music, but even they can recognise all lack of sentiment in singing, and, accordingly, no one heeded her muscular efforts. Everybody buzzed obliviously.

Swami remained the centre of feminine gravity, and there were few men present to rival him in spiritual or mundane attractions.

As we left the hall Mr. Bradley said, "That was Hartwell who just passed us on the street. Did you see him?"

"No," I replied, looking back at the vanishing figure.

"He did not recognise us. His sister's death seems to be wearing on him. He hardly looks himself. I hear he is going to England for the summer."

"Indeed!" I said, as calmly as possible. "I had not heard that. When does he sail?"

"Next week, some of the men told me."

The day following I asked Elizabeth if she had heard that Mr. Hartwell was going abroad. She looked at me steadily, replying: "Warren has not told me if he is going. He seems unhappy and lonely. Perhaps the trip would do him good."

"No doubt it would," I replied, and we said no more.

The next afternoon Elizabeth and I attended an afternoon tea at Copley Hall, given in connection with an exhibition of paintings by modern artists. Warren Hartwell was there, standing before a marine view which evidently pleased him. He stood holding his hat behind him with both hands, oblivious of his many acquaintances.

I was determined to know if he intended to leave town soon or not; consequently, I moved gradually in his direction. If Elizabeth saw him she made no sign, but joined some friends as I moved along before the pictures. Finally I reached his immediate neighbourhood. I tried to make him feel my presence without speaking,

and succeeded. He recovered himself with a sudden side movement of the head and a quick sigh. "I did not see you," he said. "When did you come?"

"Several moments ago. Have you found something good?"

"Yes. There is the touch of Nature in this man's work. I wonder if any one else cares for the sea as much as I do. By the way, Miss Allston, to revert to rather a disagreeable subject, would you object to telling me how your photograph ever got into 'The American Angler's Book,' a natural history of sporting fish? This marine of the Gloucester fishermen reminds me of that strange coincidence, my own special hobby being fish and fishing."

"Not really!" I exclaimed, almost seizing his arm in my eager pleasure at this revelation. "Do you like deep-sea fishing? Can you fish all day in a boat at sea under the broiling sun, eating lunch out of a tin pail, and wearing 'ilers?' Can you do all this and enjoy every minute of it? If you can I could almost forgive you —" I hesitated.

"Almost — but not quite?" he asked, evidently controlling himself.

"No. Not quite," I replied, moving away, as I felt a great heat of colour come over my face.

He stepped along beside me, replying in another voice, "And about the photograph?"

"Oh, don't you understand? We have the same hobby. Fishing is my mania. I have every edition of Izaak Walton published, and I have a room at home fitted up with reels, and rods, and flies, and trolling lines, — every kind of tackle. My father declares I am an evolution from a fish or a mermaid. That day I was looking up some facts about game fish, and put my photograph in the book to keep the place while I turned to speak to Miss Thurlston; then forgot, and left it there."

"Strange, indeed!" he replied. "I went to Bates Hall to look at that same book. It would almost seem that you are flying in the face of Providence to treat me as you do. Have you no regard for Fate? — no superstition?"

"None whatever," I replied, stiffly. "I hear you are going to England."

"I have thought of it. I shall probably sail within a fortnight."

Elizabeth heard him say this, as she came up to where we stood. She entered into a discussion of his plans, but he and I had no further talk alone.

Several times during the next ten days he took Elizabeth and me to ride out through the Fenway and along the Riverway. All through Brookline the blossom-laden fruit-trees perfumed the air. The world seemed steeped in rich verdancy and youth, — Nature's perennial offering to mankind from her brimming cup. When man learns how to accept the riches Nature offers him he will know the secrets of life. Mr. Hartwell enjoyed a horse under him as much as I did. This I realised with a sigh. As he said, it seemed almost ungrateful to elude Fate, when she had once brought in contact two such congenial natures.

I was worn out physically from the continuous social labour I had undergone, and

would have been ready to go home, had it not been for a promised visit to Frances after my relatives left town a few days later.

Dorothy had already gone, but returned to chaperon us at the Artists' Festival, one of the unusual, and therefore interesting, social events.

Poor Dorothy! Since those days (not so very long ago, either) she has read her fate in weary numbers. Underneath her rippling, fun-seeking exterior there was always enough of her parents' nature to have held her head level had she found a worthier mate. Her sense of duty took the form of immersion in whatever gave her husband the most pleasure. She spoiled Fred exactly as she did her pet dogs and her babies, losing her own dignity and most of her influence in the act. She never knew until it was too late that human hearts crave the unattainable. Ever since Christmas the small grief-wrinkles had been gathering about her eyes, hidden only too frequently by a laugh that rang unmirthfully.

Wrinkles have been a special study of mine. After years of observation, I have become sufficiently astute to detect worry-wrinkles from grief-wrinkles at a glance. I knew Dorothy was worn to tatters, physically, by the social business of the past winter, but after I saw the heartache in her eyes I knew, also, how much hopelessness there was in her apparent fatigue. Poor Dorothy! The crash did not come for several months, but that night at the Artists' Festival, where she had few rivals in beauty of feature and carriage, I caught one glimpse of the truth when she turned from a gay chattering group and saw Fred talking to a certain frisky débutante at some distance from us. At the moment I thought her unjust to Fred, but in the end it proved otherwise. Poor, frivolous Dorothy!

But to return, — for weeks previous we had been running in and out of the Art Students' Association rooms, deciding with the committee on arrangements upon our costumes for the festival. The event was to partake of the character of a historical

pageant, including the festivities attending the return of the Crusaders, the costumes being limited by the committee to such as were worn in Europe between the years 1000 and 1450.

Dorothy was dressed as an early Renaissance beauty, her costume having been copied, with the aid of a New York artist, from an old French print. Elizabeth wore an antique peasant's costume she had picked up in Switzerland, and its quaint, old-fashioned modesty became her rather severe style. Frances Thurlston got up my costume, and I never before saw her take such keen interest in anything. She had a chest of old fabrics, including several large squares of cloth-of-gold. She unearthed from among her possessions a portrait of a Florentine princess, and from her fabrics, with the aid of several artists, Mr. Bradley, and a dressmaker, we produced what they all called "a stunning effect."

Many of the costumes were more elaborate than ours, but few were more picturesque. The men of the Tavern

THE PROCESSION AT THE ARTISTS' FESTIVAL.

Club went as Crusaders, and those of the Architectural Club as archers. At half-past nine the mediæval procession accompanying the Crusaders passed through Copley Hall, and an exceedingly gorgeous parade it was, impressing one anew with the sombre, disenchanting effect of modern costuming when contrasted in thought with the regal tones and strong harmonies of early-day attire.

Copley Hall was transformed into an immense mediæval tent, suggestive of Ivanhoe, Richard the Lion-hearted, Rebecca, and Rowena, whose prototypes we saw reproduced in the procession. The walls of the tent were covered on three sides with interesting old tapestries, topped by a frieze of shields emblazoned with gold and heraldic devices. The remaining side was reserved for a raised dais, on which sat the patronesses of the occasion royally attired, wearing in shining masses the jewels which Boston women have the good taste to wear seldom and with discretion.

At one side there was a stage made to resemble a bit of woodland, and beyond,

through tent-like draperies, there was revealed an out-door scene, where the mediæval games and pastimes were held after a short play had been given by amateurs of our acquaintance, without scenery, as was the custom in ancient times. After the play the scarabund, a rustic round, and several other quaint old dances were given with considerable spirit and rustic abandon. This antique dancing continued until the stroke of midnight, when, with swift transition, the form of dance changed to that of our own times, and all the spectators joined in. Richard Cœur de Lion dancing the two-step was, I admit, "a terpsichorean anachronism," as John Bradley said.

No one is permitted to attend an Artists' Festival except those costumed according to the dictates of the occasion, which is at every point picturesque and consistent with a particular design, thus creating a far more interesting effect than that of a fancy-dress ball, where the costumes are miscellaneous and without artistic purpose. John Bradley was one of the Crusaders, and his costume turned him into a fasci-

nating, dashing warrior-gallant; but, as I looked at him, I imagined Warren Hartwell, with his tall, erect figure and haughty features, arrayed in such a garb. He would have made the Cœur de Lion of the evening look insignificant. I wished for him — in Crusader's costume.

As Mr. Bradley took me through Allston Hall, converted into a garden surrounded by a lattice covered with roses, on our way to booths where refreshments were served, he commented upon my costume. "Cloth-of-gold suits you," he said, rather solemnly for him. "That is your sphere, my princess, high up above me; but I can look and stretch out my hands."

"Are you taking to quotation like our friend, Saint Bermuda?" I asked, looking at him uncertainly.

"Yes," he replied, quickly, "and I will finish with Browning:

> "'No artist lives and loves, that longs not
> Once, and only once, and for one only.
> . . . . . .
> So to be the man, and leave the artist,
> Gain the man's joy, miss the artist's sorrow.'"

"Mr. Bradley," I replied, sympathetically, "your life is not, then, entirely made up of merriment and 'copy'?"

"You know better than that, but you cannot help me. Your life is cast upon the cloth-of-gold, mine is the colour of printer's ink,— black. Our colours are certainly out of harmony." He spoke bitterly. I said trite things in trying to answer unconsciously. He replied, almost brusquely: "That is over now. Every man has his moment of weakness. Come, let us guage the horn of plenty at the court of the Lion-hearted."

I do not believe people know much of the real John Bradley; but still his moods are melodramatic, and his suffering more poetic than cruel.

At that moment Mrs. Bobby Short swept up to us in an early Venetian costume of great magnificence and beauty. Her satellites followed close behind, and soon we were merged into their number. Together we passed into the viand booths. Upon no other occasion have I ever seen Bostonians in numbers unbend from their hereditary

COMMONWEALTH AVENUE, FROM THE PUBLIC GARDEN.

stiffness so universally and gracefully. They seemed to dramatise themselves away from unbending Puritanism and lose themselves in the more ardent spirit of the past. Undoubtedly, the Artists' Festival is unequalled by any other form of social entertainment I have ever witnessed in America, in point of beauty, historical interest, and actual, vital pleasure. Every one taking part feels himself for once in his life a picture, a romance, or a poem; therefore, he thoroughly enjoys himself in the imagination, where the better part of joy finds source.

The festival closed the social season, and my relatives left town. I went to Frances for the promised visit; then she, Mr. Bradley, and I began to make a child's holiday of the springtime. She bore with him nobly, considering his sex. We sat on the benches in the Public Garden, where pansies and tulips had succeeded the earlier flowers in great, glowing masses, relieved by the intensely green grass and trees. We loitered along Commonwealth Avenue on "the sunny side," among the dozens of

infants taking the air in their carriages, in charge of nurses chattering a conglomerate language, made up of French, Swedish, German, and English from the Emerald Isle. We even took trips about the lake in the garden on the swan-boats, and longer trips down the harbour to Hull and Nantasket.

They were showing me how real Boston lives,— the great democracy from the city and suburbs to whom these open spaces of air and sunlight mean health and virtue. We climbed Blue Hill in Milton, and were rewarded by a glorious panoramic stretch of harbour, hills, and suburbs. Then we canoed on the upper Charles, where the reflections of its wooded banks and circuitous loveliness remind one of the Thames above Richmond. This life suited me better than the cloth-of-gold, but I never confessed as much to Mr. Bradley, while Frances was happier than I had ever seen her before.

One quiet morning, when the air was heavily still, portentous of a thunderstorm, I sat alone writing, Frances having gone

out. The elevator boy shouted up through the tube that Miss Allston wished to see me.

"Elizabeth!" I exclaimed, mentally, as I shouted back permission for her to come up. "What can Elizabeth be doing in town this hot day?"

She came in looking whiter than usual and more set about the mouth,—the expression which reminded one of her mother. Almost without preface she began: "I have come especially to see you, Margaret. Are we alone?"

"Yes. What is the matter?"

"Warren Hartwell came down to spend Sunday with us before sailing next Thursday. Yesterday afternoon he and I went out on the rocks by the Ledge,—do you remember that place?" She stopped as though my recollection were of importance.

"Is he drowned?" I cried, in suspense.

"No," she said, quickly. "You would care a great deal if he were, wouldn't you?"

"Yes," I said, with relief. "I would care; so would you or any of his friends."

"Yes, his friends would care," she re-

plied, drawing her veil down from her sailor hat over her face. "Warren and I have been more like brother and sister than mere friends all our lives, and that accounts for his talking to me as he did. He told me that he loved you hopelessly, Margaret, but that sometimes he was tempted to believe you cared for him and held back for some inexplicable reason. He said he knew you were offended because he did not return your photograph the moment he discovered its identity, but he wished to know of me if I thought that trivial offence would keep from him a woman who truly loved him —"

"Did he consider it honourable to show my picture at —?" I broke in; but she interrupted me.

"Wait a moment. He did not show your picture at the club after he knew whose picture it was. I asked him that question, to his utter astonishment. He replied that, on the evening after finding it, he was talking to Willoughby Winford at the club about photography, and, by chance, produced the unknown photograph, as an

excellent example of modern process, and asked Mr. Winford if he knew the original. That is all, Margaret, but out of that grew all the gossip. The first man gave one version, the second another, and the latter's wife probably a third, hers of the lurid, yellow-journal type. You know how such stories gather mud as they run. I could never believe that of Warren — I know him too well; but you doubted him, and still you love him! How could you, Margaret?"

She leaned against the chair, throwing back her light jacket, as if for air. My cousin Elizabeth was to me at that moment a heroine.

I stretched out my hand to her. She held it tightly in a clinging grasp, while her head leaned away from me as I said, rapidly: "Elizabeth, you have done us both the greatest service a woman could do. Tell me how to show my gratitude? I believe his word, if I did not believe in him against strong evidence —"

"Believe his word!" she interrupted. "If you did not, your love would not be worth suffering for — I mean, his suffering

for. There is no man living more honourable than Warren. I don't see how any one could doubt him."

I bent over her hand, my eyes cast down. I knew my cousin Elizabeth to be more worthy the love of this man than I was, but I must not tell her so.

"He said he would write, asking for an interview before he sails. He thought it unlikely he could find you alone here," she continued, in short breaths, as if the heat oppressed her, drawing away her hand as she spoke.

"I will write him at once when to come—"

"No, you must not," she exclaimed, grasping my arm and looking at me with all of her indomitable will and pride in her face. "You must never let him know that I came to you. I was afraid you might refuse him the interview; that is what I ask in return. Promise me."

"Never in all our lives, Elizabeth?"

"Never so long as we all do live," she replied, solemnly, grasping the back of a chair.

"I promise, Elizabeth," and I leaned over and kissed her.

"I must go," she said, hurriedly, looking at her watch, "or I shall miss the noon train."

"You are the best woman I ever knew, Elizabeth," I began.

"Remember your promise. Good-bye," she replied, and went down-stairs.

As I sat meditating, too engrossed in the thought of what she had done to realise immediately the influence of her act upon my life, a special-delivery letter came from Warren Hartwell, asking for a few moments with me, only long enough for him to make an important explanation.

He came the following afternoon, and I committed myself to life with a Bostonian, though not without promise of his reform in several matters, particularly in the pronunciation of the word "idea." He admitted that the "r" was as superfluous as his many other faults, whereupon I assured him he had fewer faults than any other Bostonian. But he only smiled in the provoking, incredulous way he has.

"What a good girl Elizabeth is!" he said, before leaving me. "We owe her a great deal for telling me how matters stood with you, Margaret. Elizabeth was always a good girl, conscientious and clear-headed."

His tone was so condescending that for a moment I was tempted; but I remembered her face, and was true to her. All I said was: "Neither one of us is worthy of Elizabeth Allston. She is a heroine."

"I did not know you cared so much for her as that, dear," he said. "She has certainly been a good friend to me all my life. I shall be glad to be her cousin, but I know a woman who is at least her equal in every way."

Even though I loved him, I pitied his lack of insight. With a woman's inconsistency I should have been unhappy had he thought otherwise, and was unhappy because he thought as he did — it seemed unfair to Elizabeth.

When John Bradley congratulated me he merely said, "I was not wrong about the cloth-of-gold. Hartwell is a lucky man."

Frances grunted considerably and berated men in general; but I think her real grievance lay in believing that I was marrying the wrong man for my best happiness. She had only seen the cloth-of-gold side of Warren. I did not agree with her. I had learned that the Bostonian feels deeper than other men, even though he does not tell you so every day; also, that he can unbend.

Aunt Drusilla merely exclaimed, "The idear! you two?" but looked more than she spoke, voicing the opinion of Boston society when one of its members forgets himself and his connections enough to marry an outsider.

I told Warren that if he had contemporaneous connections I should not be certain of our future, but I considered myself equal to managing one Bostonian.

"You have shown that throughout our acquaintance," he replied. "In fact, as far as the reform movement goes, I don't know but you are a pretty good Bostonian already."

And perhaps he was right. However, I

replied, "The spirit of reform is induced by the crying need of mankind;" but he held out his arms and silenced me by replying, "You have come to fill a crying need, an empty home, Margaret. Come and fill the need of my heart and you can finish your reform of its owner as you will."

"Of its owner?" I asked, into his left breast pocket. "That would be I."

"Well, I don't know but your tongue would be as good a starting-place for reform as any. After that movement is set in motion there will be small difficulty in regulating your slave, generally known as Warren Hartwell."

My slave! When the upright fall they sink low. When a Bostonian unbends he drops all the way to his knees.

That was the moment of my revenge — and happiness.

THE END.

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